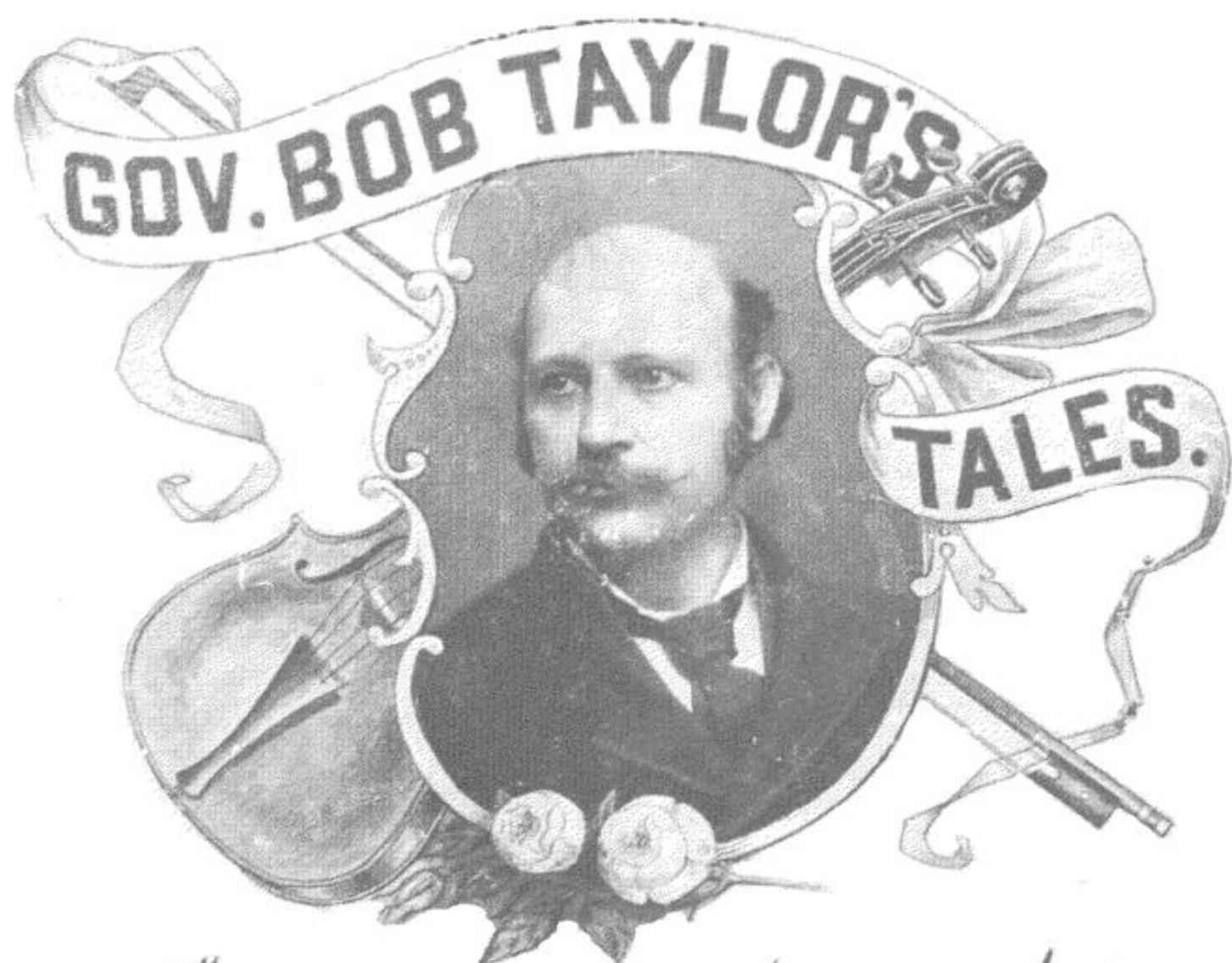




"THE FIDDLE AND THE BOW,"

"THE PARADISE OF FOOLS,"

"VISIONS AND DREAMS."

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Gov. Bob. Taylor's Tales.



“THE FIDDLE AND THE BOW,”



“THE PARADISE OF FOOLS”,



“VISIONS AND DREAMS.”



ILLUSTRATED.



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PREFACE.

This volume presents the first publication of the famous lectures of Governor Robert L. Taylor. His great popularity as an orator and entertainer, and his wide reputation as a humorist, have caused repeated inquiries from all sections of the country for his lectures in book form; and this has given rise to an earlier publication than was expected.

The lectures are given without the slightest abridgment, just as delivered from the platform throughout the country. The consecutive chain of each is left undisturbed; and the idea of paragraphing, and giving headlines to the various subjects treated, was conceived merely for the convenience of the reader.

In the dialect of his characters, the melody of his songs, and the originality of his quaint, but beautiful conceptions, Governor Taylor's lectures are temples of thought, lighted with windows of fun.

DELONG RICE.

**Temples of Thought,
Lighted with
Windows
Of Fun.**

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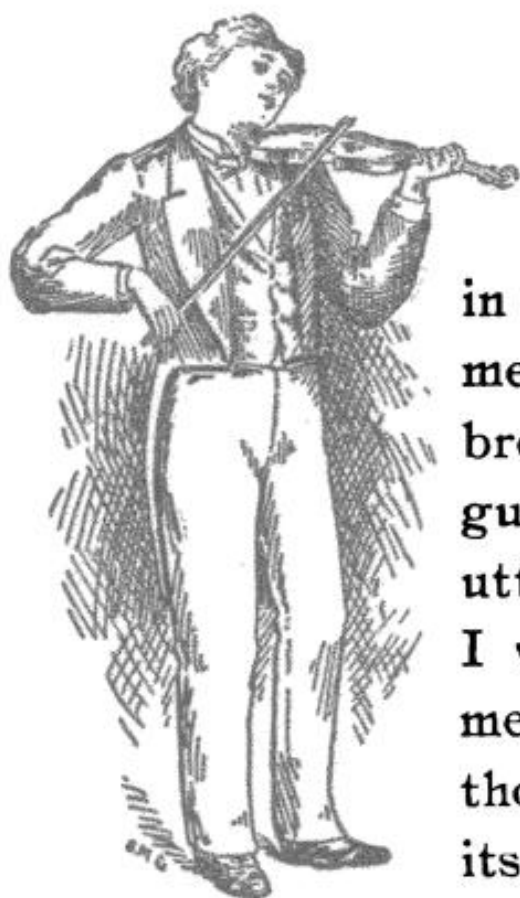
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“THE FIDDLE AND THE BOW.”



I heard a great master play on the wondrous violin; his bow quivered like the wing of a bird; in every quiver there was a melody, and every melody breathed a thought in language sweeter than was ever uttered by human tongue. I was conjured, I was mesmerized by his music. I thought I fell asleep under its power, and was rapt into the realm of visions and dreams. The enchanted violin broke out in tumult, and through the rifted shadows in my dream I thought I saw old ocean lashed to fury. The wing of the storm-god brooded above it, dark and lowering with night and tempest and war. I heard the shriek of the angry hurricane, the loud rattling musketry of rain, and

hail, and the louder and deadlier crash and roar of the red artillery on high. Its rumbling batteries, unlimbered on the vapory heights and manned by the fiery gunners of the storm, boomed their volleying thunders to the terrible rythm of the strife below. And in every stroke of the bow fierce lightnings leaped down from their dark pavilions of cloud, and, like armed angels of light, flashed their trenchant blades among the phantom squadrons marshalling for battle on the field of the deep. I heard the bugle blast and battle cry of the charging winds, wild and exultant, and then I saw the billowy monsters rise, like an army of Titans, to scale and carry the hostile heights of heaven. Assailing again and again, as often hurled back headlong into the ocean's abyss, they rolled, and surged, and writhed, and raged, till the affrighted earth trembled at the uproar of the warring elements. I saw the awful majesty and might of Jehovah flying on the wings of the tempest, planting his footsteps on the trackless deep, veiled in darkness and in clouds. There was a shifting of the bow; the storm died away in the distance, and the morning broke in floods of glory. Then the violin revived and poured

out its sweetest soul. In its music I heard the rustle of a thousand joyous wings, and a burst of song from a thousand joyous throats. Mocking birds and linnets thrilled the glad air with warblings; gold finches, thrushes and bobolinks trilled their happiest tunes; and the oriole sang a lullaby to her hanging cradle that rocked in the wind. I heard the twitter of skimming swallows and the scattered covey's piping call; I heard the robin's gay whistle, the croaking of crows, the scolding of blue-jays, and the melancholy cooing of a dove. The swaying tree-tops seemed vocal with bird-song while he played, and the labyrinths of leafy shade echoed back the chorus. Then the violin sounded the hunter's horn, and the deep-mouthed pack of fox hounds opened loud and wild, far in the ringing woods, and it was like the music of a hundred chiming bells. There was a tremor of the bow, and I heard a flute play, and a harp, and a golden-mouthed cornet; I heard the mirthful babble of happy voices, and peals of laughter ringing in the swelling tide of pleasure. Then I saw a vision of snowy arms, voluptuous forms, and light fantastic slippered feet, all whirling and floating in the mazes of the misty dance. The

flying fingers now tripped upon the trembling strings like fairy-feet dancing on the nodding violets, and the music glided into a still sweeter strain. The violin told a story of human life. Two lovers strayed beneath the elms and oaks, and down by the river side, where daffodils and pansies bend and smile to rippling waves, and there, under the bloom of incense-breathing bowers, under the soothing sound of humming bees and splashing waters, there, the old, old story, so old and yet so new, conceived in heaven, first told in Eden and then handed down through all the ages, was told over and over again. Ah, those downward drooping eyes, that mantling blush, that trembling hand in meek submission pressed, that heaving breast, that fluttering heart, that whispered "yes," wherein a heaven lies—how well they told of victory won and paradise regained! And then he swung her in a grapevine swing. Young man, if you want to win her, wander with her amid the elms and oaks, and swing her in a grapevine swing.

"Swinging in the grapevine swing,
Laughing where the wild birds sing;
I dream and sigh for the days gone by,
Swinging in the grapevine swing."



"SWINGING IN THE GRAPEVINE SWING,"

But swiftly the tides of music run, and swiftly speed the
hours;

Life's pleasures end when scarce begun, e'en as the sum-
mer flowers.

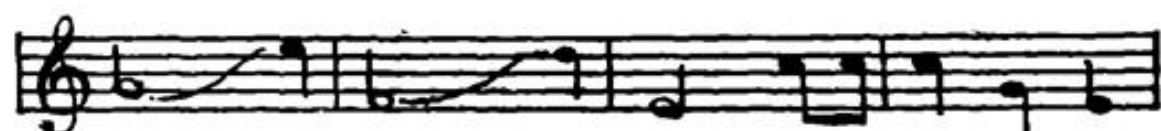
The violin laughed like a child and my dream changed again. I saw a cottage amid the elms and oaks and a little curly-head toddled at the door; I saw a happy husband and father return from his labors in the evening and kiss his happy wife and frolic with his baby. The purple glow now faded from the Western skies; the flowers closed their petals in the dewy slumbers of the night; every wing was folded in the bower; every voice was hushed; the full-orbed moon poured silver from the East, and God's eternal jewels flashed on the brow of night. The scene changed again while the great master played, and at midnight's holy hour, in the light of a lamp dimly burning, clad in his long, white mother-hubbard, I saw the disconsolate victim of love's young dream nervously walking the floor, in his bosom an aching heart, in his arms the squalling baby. On the drowsy air, like the sad wails of a lost spirit, fell his woeful voice singing:



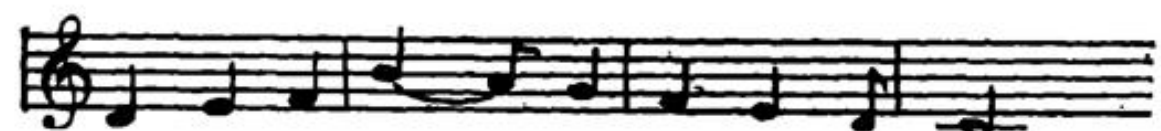
With my la - e, lo - e, hush - a-bye ba - by,



Danc - ing the ba - by ev - er so high; with my



La - e, lo - e, hush - a-bye ba - by



Mam - ma will come to you bye and bye.

It was a battle with king colic. But this ancient invader of the empire of babyhood had sounded a precipitate retreat; the curly head had fallen over on the paternal shoulder; the tear-stained little face was almost calm in repose, when down went a naked heel square on an inverted tack. Over went the work table; down came the work basket, scissors and all; up went the heel with the tack sticking in it, and the hero of the daffodils and pansies, with a yell like the Indian war-whoop, and with his



A BATTLE WITH KING COLIC.

mother-hubbard now floating at half mast, hopped in agony to a lounge in the rear.

There was "weeping and gnashing of teeth;" there were hoarse mutterings; there was an angry shake of the screaming baby, which he

had awakened again. Then I heard an explosion of wrath from the warm blankets of the conjugal couch, eloquent with the music of “how dare you shake my little baby that way!!!! I’ll tell pa to-morrow!” which instantly brought the trained husband into line again, singing:

“La-e, lo-e, hush-a-bye baby, dancing the baby ever so
high,
With my la-e, lo-e, hush-a-bye baby, mamma will come to
you bye and bye.”

The paregoric period of life is full of spoons and midnight squalls, but what is home without a baby?

The bow now brooded like a gentle spirit over the violin, and the music eddied into a mournful tone; another year intervened; a little coffin sat by an empty cradle; the prints of baby fingers were on the window panes; the toys were scattered on the floor; the lullaby was hushed; the sobs and cries, the mirth and mischief, and the tireless little feet were no longer in the way to vex and worry. Sunny curls drooped above eyelids that were closed forever; two little cheeks were bloodless and cold, and two little dimpled hands were folded upon a motionless breast. The vibrant instrument sighed and

wept; it rang the church bell's knell; and the second story of life, which is the sequel to the first, was told.

Then I caught glimpses of a half-veiled paradise and a sweet breath from its flowers; I saw the hazy stretches of its landscapes, beautiful and gorgeous as Mahomet's vision of heaven; I heard the faint swells of its distant music and saw the flash of white wings that never weary, wafting to the bosom of God an infant spirit; a string snapped; the music ended; my vision vanished.

The old Master is dead, but his music will live forever.

CHERISH THE LITTLE ONES.

Do you sometimes forget and wound the hearts of your children with frowns and the dagger of cruel words, and sometimes with a blow? Do you sometimes, in your own peevishness, and your own meanness, wish yourself away from their fretful cries and noisy sports? Then think that to-morrow may ripen the wicked wish; to-morrow death may lay his hand upon a little fluttering heart and it will be stilled forever. 'Tis then you will miss the sunbeam and the sweet little flower that reflected heaven on the soul. Then cherish the little ones! Be tender with the babes! Make your homes beautiful! All that remains to us of paradise lost, clings about the home. Its purity, its innocence, its virtue, are there, untainted by sin, unclouded by guile. There woman shines, scarcely dimmed by the fall, reflecting the loveliness of Eden's first wife and mother; the grace, the beauty, the sweetness of the wifely relation, the tenderness of maternal affection, the gracious-

ness of manner which once charmed angel guests, still glorify the home.

If you would make your homes happy, you must make the children happy. Get down on the floor with your prattling boys and girls and play horse with them; take them on your back and gallop them to town; don't kick up and buck, but be a good and gentle old steed, and join in a hearty horse laugh in their merriment. Take the baby on your knee and gallop him to town; let him practice gymnastics on top of your head and take your scalp; let him puncture a hole in your ear with his little teeth, and bite off the end of the paternal nose. Make your homes beautiful with your duty and your love, make them bright with your mirth and your music.

Victor Hugo said of Napoleon the Great: "The frontiers of kingdoms oscillated on the map. The sound of a super-human sword being drawn from its scabbard could be heard; and he was seen, opening in the thunder his two wings, the Grand Army and the Old Guard; he was the archangel of war." And when I read it I thought of the death and terror that followed wherever the shadow of the open wings fell. I

thought of the blood that flowed, and the tears that were shed wherever the sword gleamed in his hand. I thought of the human skulls that paved Napoleon's way to St. Helena's barren rock, and I said, 'I would rather dwell in a log cabin, in the beautiful land of the mountains where I was born and reared, and sit at its humble hearthstone at night, and in the fire-light, play the humble rural tunes on the fiddle to my happy children, and bask in the smiles of my sweet wife, than to be the 'archangel of war,' with my hands stained with human blood, or to make the 'frontiers of kingdoms oscillate on the map of the world, and then, away from home and kindred and country, die at last in exile and in solitude.'

FAT MEN AND BALD-HEADED MEN.

It ought to be the universal law that none but fat men and bald-headed men should be the heads of families, because they are always good natured, contented and easily managed. There is more music in a fat man's laugh than there is in a thousand orchestras or brass bands. Fat sides and bald heads are the symbols of music, innocence, and meek submission. O! ladies listen to the words of wisdom! Cultivate the society of fat men and bald-headed men, for "of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." And the fat women, God bless their old sober sides—they are "things of beauty, and a joy forever."

THE VIOLIN, THE POET LAUREATE OF MUSIC.

How sweet are the lips of morning that kiss the waking world! How sweet is the bosom of night that pillows the world to rest. But sweeter than the lips of morning, and sweeter than the bosom of night, is the voice of music that wakes a world of joys and soothes a world of sorrows. It is like some unseen ethereal ocean whose silver surf forever breaks in song; forever breaks on valley, hill, and craig, in ten thousand symphonies. There is a melody in every sunbeam, a sunbeam in every melody; there is a flower in every song, a love song in every flower; there is a sonnet in every gurgling fountain, a hymn in every brimming river, an anthem in every rolling billow. Music and light are twin angels of God, the first-born of heaven, and mortal ear and mortal eye have caught only the echo and the shadow of their celestial glories.

The violin is the poet laureate of music; violin of the virtuoso and master, *fiddle* of the untutored in the ideal art. It is the aristocrat of the palace and the hall; it is the *democrat* of the unpretentious home and humble cabin. As violin, it weaves its garlands of roses and camelias; as fiddle it scatters its modest violets. It is admired by the cultured for its magnificent powers and wonderful creations; it is loved by the millions for its simple melodies.

THE CONVICT AND HIS FIDDLE.

One bright morning, just before Christmas day, an official stood in the Executive chamber in my presence as Governor of Tennessee, and said: “Governor, I have been implored by a poor miserable wretch in the penitentiary to bring you this rude fiddle. It was made by his own hands with a penknife during the hours allotted to him for rest. It is absolutely valueless, it is true, but it is his petition to you for mercy. He begged me to say that he has neither attorneys nor influential friends to plead for him; that he is poor, and all he asks is, that when the Governor shall sit at his own happy fireside on Christmas eve, with his own happy children around him, he will play one tune on this rough fiddle and think of a cabin far away in the mountains whose hearthstone is cold and desolate and surrounded by a family of poor little wretched, ragged children, crying for bread and waiting and listening for the footsteps of their father.”

Who would not have been touched by such an

appeal? The record was examined; Christmas eve came; the Governor sat that night at his own happy fireside, surrounded by his own happy children; and he played one tune to them on that rough fiddle. The hearthstone of the cabin in the mountains was bright and warm; a pardoned prisoner sat with his baby on his knee, surrounded by *his* rejoicing children, and in the presence of *his* happy wife, and although there was naught but poverty around him, his heart sang: "Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home;" and then he reached up and snatched his fiddle down from the wall, and played "Jordan is a hard road to travel."

A VISION OF THE OLD FIELD SCHOOL.

Did you never hear a fiddler fiddle? I have. I heard a fiddler fiddle, and the hey-dey-diddle of his frolicking fiddle called back the happy days of my boyhood. The old field schoolhouse with its batten doors creaking on wooden hinges, its windows innocent of glass, and its great, yawning fireplace, cracking and roaring and flaming like the infernal regions, rose from the dust of memory and stood once more among the trees. The limpid spring bubbled and laughed at the foot of the hill. Flocks of nimble, noisy boys turned somersaults and skinned the cat and ran and jumped half hammon on the old play ground. The grim old teacher stood in the door; he had no brazen-mouthed bell to ring then as we have now, but he shouted at the top of his voice: "Come to books!!!" And they came. Not to come meant "war and rumors of war." The backless benches, high above the floor, groaned under the weight of irrepressible young America; the multitude of mischievous, shining

faces, the bare legs and feet, swinging to and fro, and the mingled hum of happy voices, spelling aloud life's first lessons, prophesied the future glory of the State. The curriculum of the old field school was the same everywhere—one Webster's blue backed, elementary spelling book, one thumb-paper, one stone-bruise, one sore toe, and Peter Parley's Travels.

The grim old teacher, enthroned on his split bottomed chair, looked terrible as an army with banners; and he presided with a dignity and solemnity which would have excited the envy of the United States Supreme Court: I saw the school commissioners visit him, and heard them question him as to his system of teaching. They asked him whether, in geography, he taught that the world was round, or that the world was flat. With great dignity he replied: "That depends upon whar I'm teachin'. If my patrons desire me to teach the round system, I teach it; if they desire me to teach the flat system, I teach that."

At the old field school I saw the freshman class, barefooted and with pantaloons rolled up to the knees, stand in line under the ever uplifted rod, and I heard them sing the never-to-be-

forgotten b-a ba's. They sang them in the *olden* times, and this is the way they sang: “b-a ba, b-e be, b-i bi-ba be bi, b-o bo, b-u bu-ba be bi bo bu.”

I saw a sophomore dance a jig to the music of a dogwood sprout for throwing paper wads. I saw a junior compelled to stand on the dunce block, on one foot—(*a la* gander) for winking at his sweetheart in time of books, for failing to know his lessons, and for “various and sundry other high crimes and misdemeanors.”

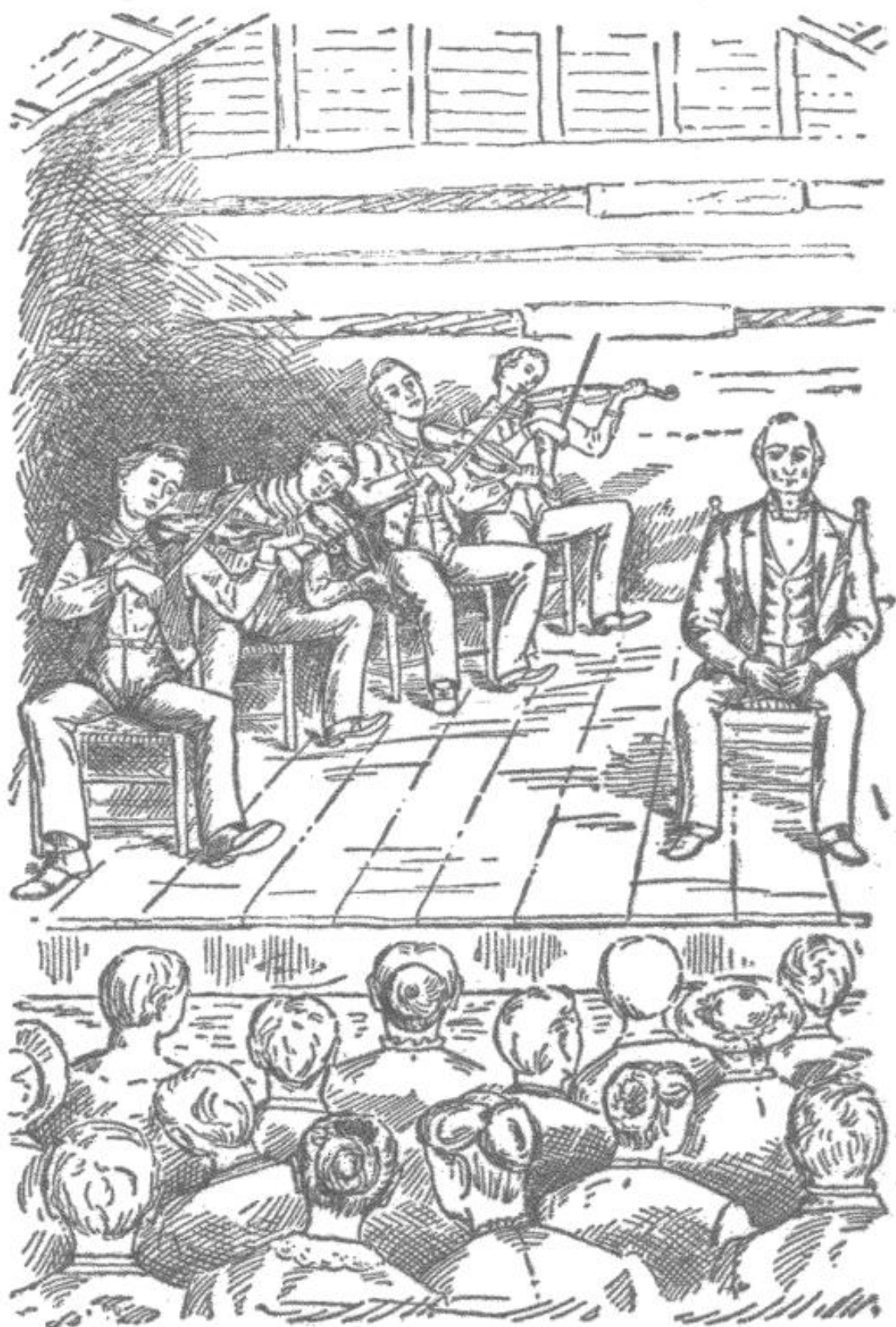
A twist of the fiddler's bow brought a yell from the fiddle, and in my dream, I saw the school come pouring out into the open air. Then followed the games of “prisoner's base,” “town-ball,” “Antney-over;” “bull-pen” and “knucks,” the hand to hand engagements with yellow jackets, the Bunker Hill and Brandywine battles with bumblebees, the charges on flocks of geese, the storming of apple orchards and hornet's nests, and victories over hostile “setting” hens. Then I witnessed the old field school “Exhibition”—the *wonderful* “exhibition”—they call it Commencement now. Did you never witness an old field school “exhibition,” far out in the country, and listen to

its music? If you have not your life is a failure—you are a broken string in the harp of the universe. The old field school "exhibition" was the parade ground of the advance guard of civilization; it was the climax of great events in the olden times; and vast assemblies were swayed by the eloquence of the budding sockless statesmen. It was at the old field school "exhibition" that the goddess of liberty always received a broken nose, and the poetic muse a black eye; it was at the old field school "exhibition" that *Greece* and *Rome* rose and fell, in seas of gore, about every fifteen minutes in the day, and,

The American eagle, with unwearied flight,

Soared upward and upward, till he soared out of sight.

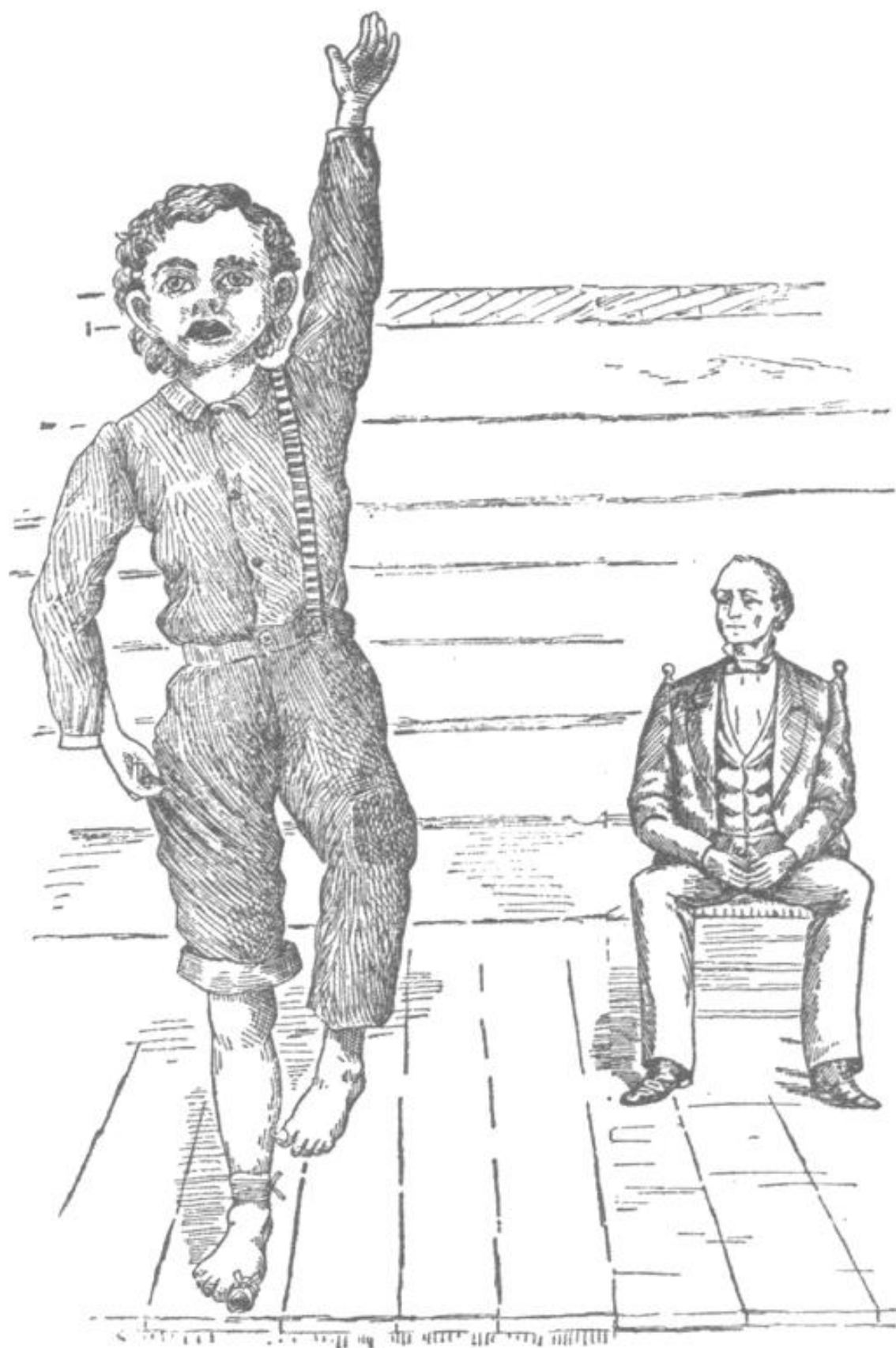
It was at the old field school "exhibition" that the fiddle and the bow immortalized themselves. When the frowning old teacher advanced on the stage and nodded for silence, instantly there *was* silence in the vast assembly; and when the corps of country fiddlers, "one of which I was often whom," seated on the stage, hoisted the black flag, and rushed into the dreadful charge on "Old Dan Tucker," or "Arkansas Traveller," the spectacle was sublime. Their heads swung time; their bodies rocked time;



MUSIC OF THE OLD FIELD SCHOOL EXHIBITION.

their feet patted time; the muscles of their faces twitched time; their eyes winked time; their teeth ground time. The whizzing bows and screaming fiddles electrified the audience who cheered at every brilliant turn in the charge of the fiddlers. The good women laughed for joy; the men winked at each other and popped their fists; it was like the charge of the Old Guard at Waterloo, or a battle with a den of snakes. Upon the completion of the grand overture of the fiddlers the brilliant programme of the "exhibition," which usually lasted all day, opened with "Mary had a little lamb;" and it gathered fury until it reached Patrick Henry's "Give me liberty or give me death!!!" The programme was interspersed with compositions by the girls, from the simple subject of "flowers," including "blessings brighten as they take their flight," up to "every cloud has a silver lining;" and it was interlarded with frequent tunes by the fiddlers from early morn till close of day.

Did you never hear the juvenile orator of the old field school speak? He was not dressed like a United States Senator; but he was dressed with a view to disrobing for bed, and completing his morning toilet instantly; both of which he per-



'THE OLD FIELD SCHOOL ORATOR.

formed during the acts of ascending and descending the stairs. His uniform was very simple. It consisted of one pair of breeches rolled up to the knees, with one patch on the "western hemisphere," one little shirt with one button at the top, one "gallus," and one invalid straw hat. His straw hat stood guard over his place on the bench, while he was delivering his great speech at the "exhibition." With great dignity and eclat, the old teacher advanced on the stage and introduced him to the expectant audience, and he came forward like a cyclone.

"The boy stood on the burnin' deck whence all but him had fled——The flames that lit the battle's wreck shown 'round him o'er the dead, yet beautiful and bright he stood——the boy stood on the burnin' deck——and he wuz the bravest boy that ever wuz. His father told him to keep a-stan'in' there till he told him to git off'n there, and the boy he jist kep' a stan'in' there——and fast the flames rolled on——The old man went down stairs in the ship to see about sump'n, an' he got killed down there, an' the boy he didn't know it, an' he jist kept a stan'in' there——an' fast the flames rolled on.

He cried aloud: “say father, say, if *yit* my task is done,” but his father wuz dead an’ couldn’t hear ’im, an’ the boy he jist kep’ a stan’in’ there——an’ fast the flames rolled on. ——They caught like flag banners in the sky, an’ at last the ol’ biler busted, an’ the boy he went up!!!!!!!’,

At the close of this great speech the fiddle fainted as dead as a herring.

THE QUILTING AND THE OLD VIRGINIA REEL.

The old fiddler took a fresh chew of long, green tobacco, and rosined his bow. He glided off into "Hop light ladies, your cake's all dough," and then I heard the watch dog's honest bark. I heard the guinea's merry "pot-rack." I heard a cock crow. I heard the din of happy voices in the "big house" and the sizz and songs of boiling kettles in the kitchen. It was an old time quilting—the May-day of the glorious ginger cake and cider era of the American Republic; and the needle was mightier than the sword. The pen of Jefferson announced to the world, the birth of the child of the ages; the sword of Washington defended it in its cradle, but it would have perished there had it not been for the brave women of that day who plied the needle and made the quilts that warmed it, and who nursed it and rocked it through the perils of its infancy, into the strength of a giant. The quilt was attached to a quadrang-

ular frame suspended from the ceiling; and the good women sat around it and quilted the live-long day, and were courted by the swains between stitches. At sunset the quilt was always finished; a cat was thrown into the center of it, and the happy maiden nearest to whom the escaping “kitty-puss” passed was sure to be the first to marry.

Then followed the groaning supper table, surrounded by giggling girls, bashful young men and gossipy old matrons who monopolized the conversation. There was a warm and animated discussion among the old ladies as to what was the most delightful product of the garden. One old lady said, that so “fur” as she was “consarned,” she preferred the “per-turnip”—another preferred the “pertater”—another the “cow-cumber,” and still another voted “ingern” king. But suddenly a wise looking old dame raised her spectacles and settled the whole question by observing: “Ah, ladies, you may talk about yer per-turnips, and your pertaters, and your passnips and other gyardin sass, but the sweetest wedgetable that ever melted on these ol’ gums o’ mine is the ‘possum.”

At length the feast was ended, the old folks departed and the fun and frolic began in earnest at the quilting. Old uncle "Ephraham" was an old darkey in the neighborhood, distinguished for calling the figures for all the dances, for miles and miles around. He was a tall, raw-boned, angular old darkey with a very bald head, and a great deal of white in his eyes. He had thick, heavy lips and a very flat nose. I will tell you a little story of uncle "Ephraham." He lived alone in his cabin, as many of the old time darkeys lived, and his 'possum dog lived with him. One evening old uncle "Ephraham" came home from his labors and took his 'possum dog into the woods and soon caught a fine, large, fat 'possum. He brought him home and dressed him; and then he slipped into his master's garden and stole some fine, large, fat sweet potatoes—"Master's nigger, Master's taters,") and he washed the potatoes and split them and piled them in the oven around the 'possum. He set the oven on the red hot coals and put the lid on, and covered it with red hot coals, and then sat down in the corner and nodded and breathed the sweet aroma of the baking 'possum, till it was done. Then he set it out

into the middle of the floor, and took the lid off, and sat down by the smoking 'possum and soliloquized: “Dat's de fines' job ob bakin' 'possum I evah has done in my life, but dat 'possum's too hot to eat yit. I believes I'll jis lay down heah by 'im an' take a nap while he's coolin', an' maybe I'll dream about eat'n 'im, an' den I'll git up an' eat 'im, an' I'll git de good uv dat 'possum boaf times dat-a-way.” So he lay down on the floor, and in a moment he was sleeping as none but the old time darkey could sleep, as sweetly as a babe in its mother's arms. Old Cy was another old darkey in the neighborhood, prowling around. He poked his head in at “Ephraham's” door ajar, and took in the whole situation at a glance. Cy merely remarked to himself: “I loves 'possum myself.” And he slipped in on his tip-toes and picked up the 'possum and ate him from tip to tail, and piled the bones down by sleeping “Ephraham;” he ate the sweet potatoes and piled the hulls down by the bones; then he reached into the oven and got his hand full of 'possum grease and rubbed it on “Ephraham's” lips and cheeks and chin, and then folded his tent and silently stole away. At length “Ephraham” awoke—

"Sho' nuf, sho' nuf—jist as I expected; I dreamt about eat'n dat 'possum an' it wuz de sweetest dream I evah has had yit." He looked around, but empty was the oven—" 'possum gone." "Sho'ly to de Lo'd," said "Ephraham," "I nuvvah eat dat 'possum while I wuz a dreamin' about eat'n 'im." He poked his tongue out—"Yes, dat's 'possum grease sho,—I s'pose I eat dat 'possum while I wuz a dreamin' about eat'n 'im, but ef I did eat 'im, he sets lighter on my constitution an' has less influence wid me dan any 'possum I evah has eat in my bo'n days."

Old uncle "Ephraham" was present at the country dance in all his glory. He was attired in his master's old claw-hammer coat, a very buff vest, a high standing collar the corners of which stood out six inches from his face, striped pantaloons that fitted as tightly as a kid glove, and he wore number fourteen shoes. He looked as though he were born to call the figures of the dance. The fiddler was a young man with long legs, a curving back, and a neck of the crane fashion, embellished with an Adam's apple which made him look as though he had made an unsuccessful effort to swallow his own

head. But he was a very important personage at the dance. With great dignity he unwound his bandana handkerchief from his old fiddle and proceeded to tune for the fray.

Did you never hear a country fiddler tune his fiddle? He tuned, and he tuned, and he tuned. He tuned for fifteen minutes, and it was like a melodious frog pond during a shower of rain.

At length uncle "Ephraham" shouted: "Git yo' pardners for a cow-tillion."

The fiddler struck an attitude, and after countless yelps from his eager strings, he glided off into that sweet old Southern air of "Old Uncle Ned," as though he were mauling rails or feeding a threshing machine. Uncle "Ephraham" sang the chorus with the fiddle before he began to call the figures of the dance:

"Lay down de shovel an' de hoe—hoe—hoe, hang up de fiddle an' de bow,
For dar's no mo' work for poor ol' Ned—he's gone whar de good niggahs go."

Then, drawing himself up to his full height, he began! "Honah yo' pardnahs! swing dem co'nahs—swing yo' pardnahs! fust couple for'd an' back! half right an' leff fru! back agin! swing dem co'nahs—swing yo' pardnahs! nex'



UNCLE "EPHRAHAM" CALLING THE FIGURES OF
THE DANCE.

couple for'd an' back! half right and leff fru!
back agin! swing dem co'nahs—swing yo' pard-
nahs! fust couple to de right—lady in de centah
—han's all around—suhwing!!!—nex' couple
suhwing!!! nex' couple suhwing!!! suh-wing,
suh-wing, suh-wing!!!!!!

About this time an angry lad who had been jilted by his sweetheart, shied a fresh egg from without; it struck “Ephraham” square between the eyes and broke and landed on his upper lip. Uncle “Ephraham” yelled: “Stop de music—stop de dance—let de whole circumstances of dis occasion come to a stan’ still till I finds out who it is a scram’lin eggs aroun’ heah.”

And then the dancing subsided for the candypulling.

THE CANDY PULLING

The sugar was boiling in the kettles, and while it boiled the boys and girls played "snap," and "eleven hand," and "thimble," and blindfold," and another old play which some of our older people will remember:

"Oh! Sister Phœbe, how merry were we,
When we sat under the juniper tree—
The juniper tree- I- O."

And when the sugar had boiled down into candy they emptied it into greased saucers, or as the mountain folks called them, "greased sassers," and set it out to cool; and when it had cooled each boy and girl took a saucer; and they pulled the taffy out and patted it and rolled it till it hung well together; and then they pulled it out a foot long; they pulled it out a yard long; and they doubled it back, and pulled it out; and when it began to look like gold the sweethearts paired off and consolidated their taffy and pulled against each other. They pulled it out and doubled it back, and looped it over, and pulled it out; and

sometimes a peachblow cheek touched a bronzed one; and sometimes a sweet little voice spluttered out; “you Jack;” and there was a suspicious smack like a cow pulling her foot out of stiff mud. They pulled the candy and laughed and frolicked; the girls got taffy on their hair—the boys got taffy on their chins; the girls got taffy on their waists—the boys got taffy on their coat sleeves. They pulled it till it was as bright as a moonbeam, and then they platted it and coiled it into fantastic shapes and set it out in the crisp air to cool. Then the courting in earnest began. They did not court then as the young folks court now. The young man led his sweetheart back into a dark corner and sat down by her, and held her hand for an hour, and never said a word. But it resulted next year in more cabins on the hillsides and in the hollows; and in the years that followed the cabins were full of candy-haired children who grew up into a race of the best, the bravest, and the noblest people the sun in heaven ever shone upon.

In the bright, bright hereafter, when all the joys of all the ages are gathered up and condensed into globules of transcendent ecstasy, I doubt whether there will be anything half so

sweet as were the candy-smeared, ruby lips of the country maidens to the jeans-jacketed swains who tasted them at the candy-pulling in the happy long ago.

(Sung by Gov. Taylor to air of "Down on the Farm.")

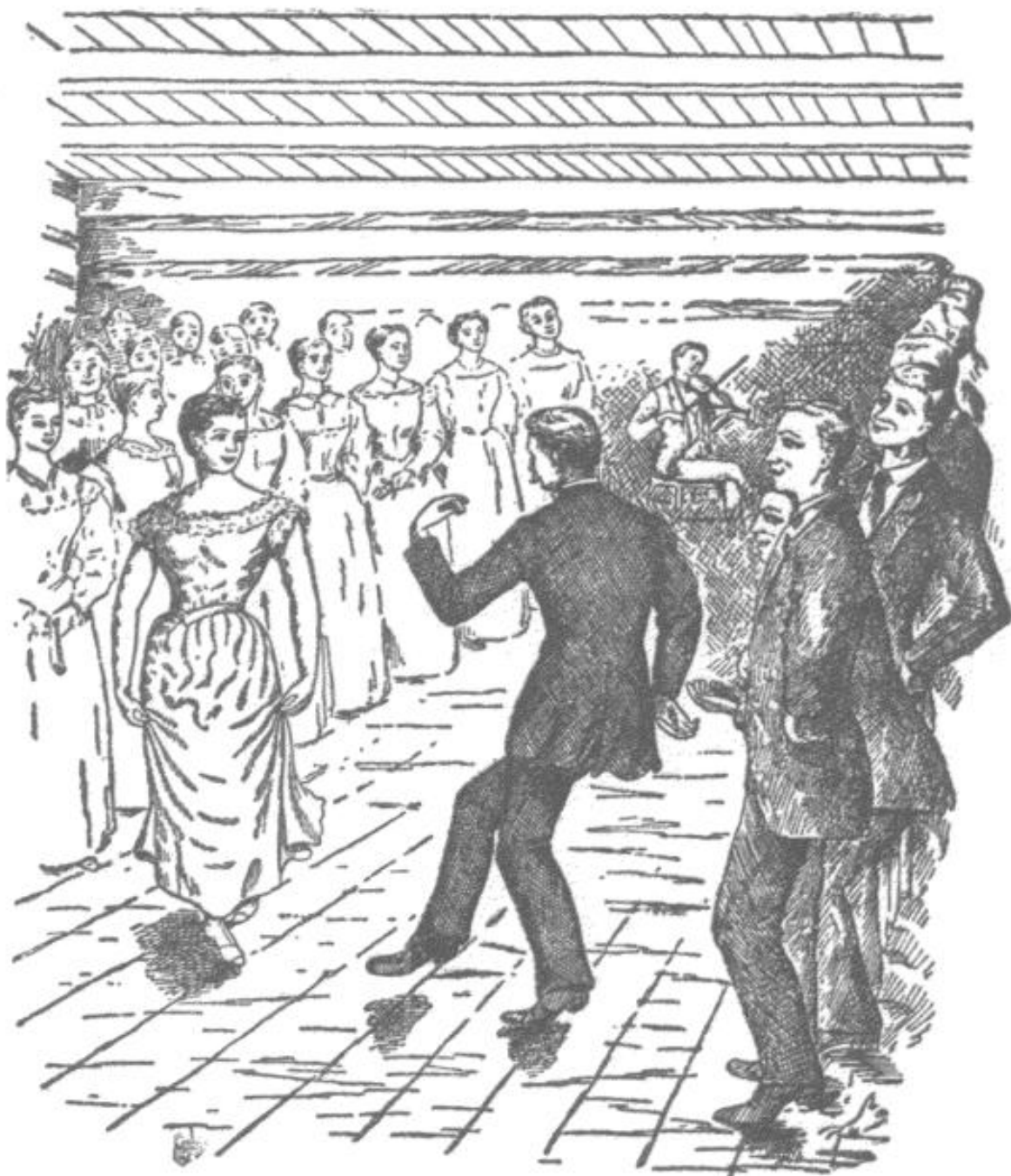
In the happy long ago,
When I used to draw the bow,
At the old log cabin hearthstone all aglow,
Oh! the fiddle laughed and sung,
And the puncheons fairly rung,
With the clatter of the shoe soles long ago.

Oh! the merry swings and whirls
Of the happy boys and girls,
In the good old time cotillion long ago!
Oh! they danced the highland fling,
And they cut the pigeon wing,
To the music of the fiddle and the bow.

But the mischief and the mirth,
And the frolics 'round the hearth,
And the flitting of the shadows to and fro,
Like a dream have passed away—
Now I'm growing old and gray,
And I'll soon hang up the fiddle and the bow.

When a few more notes I've made,
When a few more tunes I've played,
I'll be sleeping where the snowy daises grow.
But my griefs will all be o'er
When I reach the happy shore,
Where I'll greet the friends who loved me long ago.

Oh! how sweet, how precious to us all are the
memories of the happy long ago!



THE OLD VIRGINIA REEL.

THE BANQUET.

Let us leave the "egg flip" of the country dance, and take a bowl of egg-nog at the banquet. It was a modern banquet for men only. Music flowed; wine sparkled; the night was far spent—it was in the wee sma' hours. The banquet was given by Col. Punk who was the promoter of a town boom, and who had persuaded the banqueters that "there were millions in it." He had purchased some old sedge fields on the outskirts of creation, from an old squatter on the domain of Dixie, at three dollars an acre; and had stocked them at three hundred dollars an acre. The old squatter was a partner with the Colonel, and with his part of the boodle nicely done up in his wallet, was present with bouyant hopes and feelings high. Countless yarns were spun; numberless jokes passed 'round the table until, in the ecstasy of their joy, the banqueters rose from the table and clinked their glasses together, and sang in chorus:

**"Landlord, fill the flowing bowl
Until it doth run over;
Landlord fill the flowing bowl
Until it doth run over;
For to-night we'll merry merry be,
For to-night we'll merry merry be,
For to-night we'll merry merry be;
And to-morrow we'll get sober."**

The whole banquet was drunk (as banquets usually are), and the principal stockholders finally succumbed to the music of "Old Kentucky Bourbon," and sank to sleep under the table. The last toast on the programme was announced. It was a wonderful toast—"Our mineral resources:" The old squatter rose in his glory, about three o'clock in the morning, to respond to this toast, and thus he responded:

' Mizzer Churman and Gent-tul-men of the Banquet: I have never made mineralogy a study, nor zoology, nor any other kind of 'ology,' but if there haint m-i-n-e-r-l in the deestrick which you gent-tul-men have jist purchased from me at sitch magnifercent figers, then the imagernation of man is a deception an' a snare. But gent-tul-men, you caint expect to find m-i-n-e-r-l without plenty uv diggin'. I have been diggin' thar for the past forty year fur it, an' haint never struck it yit. I hope you gen-tul-men will strike it

some time endurin' the next forty year." Here, with winks and blinks and clinched teeth, the old Colonel pulled his coat tail; he was spoiling the town boom. But he would not down. He continued in the same eloquent strain: "Gent-tul-men, you caint expect to find m-i-n-e-r-l without plenty uv diggin.' You caint expect to find nothin' in this world without plenty uv diggin'. There is no excellence without labor gent-tul-men. If old Vanderbilt hadn't a-been persevering in his pertickler kind uv diggin', whar would he be to-day? He wouldn't now be a rich man, a-ridin' the billers of old ocean in his magnifercent 'yatchet.' If I hadn't a-been perseverin', an' hadn't a-kep on a-diggin' an' a-diggin', whar would I have been to-day? I mout have been seated like you gent-tul-men, at this stupenduous banquet, with my pockets full of watered stock, and some other old American citizen mout have been deliverin' this eulogy on our m-i-n-e-r-l resources. Gent-tul-men, my injunction to you is never to stop diggin'. And while you're a-diggin', cultivate a love for the beautiful, the true and the good. Speakin' of the beautiful, the true, and the good, gent-tul-men, let us not forgit woman at this magnifer-

THE BANQUET.



cent banquet—Oh! woman, woman, woman! when the mornin' stars sung together for joy—an' woman—God bless 'er—— Great God, feller citerzens, caint you understand!!!!"

At the close of this great speech the curtain fell to slow music, and there was a panic in land stocks.

THERE IS MUSIC ALL AROUND US.

There is music all around us, there is music everywhere. There is no music so sweet to the American ear as the music of politics. There is nothing that kindles the zeal of a modern patriot to a whiter heat than the prospect of an office; there is nothing that cools it off so quickly as the fading out of that prospect.

I stood on the stump in Tennessee as a candidate for Governor, and thus I cut my eagle loose: "Fellow Citizens, we live in the grandest country in the world. It stretches

From Maine's dark pines and crags of snow
To where magnolia breezes blow;

It stretches from the Atlantic Ocean on the east, to the Pacific Ocean on the west"—and an old fellow jumped up in my crowd and threw his hat in the air and shouted: "Let 'er stretch, durn 'er—hurrah for the Dimocrat Party."

An old Dutchman had a beautiful boy of whom he was very proud; and he decided to find out the bent of his mind. He adopted a very novel

method by which to test him. He slipped into the little fellow's room one morning and placed on his table a Bible, a bottle of whiskey, and a silver dollar. "Now," said he, "Ven dot boy comes in, ef he dakes dot dollar, he's goin' to be a beeznis man; ef he dakes dot Bible he'll be a breacher; ef he dakes dot vwiskey, he's no goot—he's goin' to be a druenkart." and he hid behind the door to see which his son would choose. In came the boy whistling. He ran up to the table and picked up the dollar and put it in his pocket; he picked up the Bible and put it under his arm; then he snatched up the bottle of whiskey and took two or three drinks, and went out smacking his lips. The old Dutchman poked his head out from behind the door and exclaimed: "Mine Got—he's goin' to be a bolitician."

There is no music like the music of political discussion. I have heard almost a thousand political discussions. I heard the great debate between Blaine and Ben Hill; I heard the angry colloquies between Roscoe Conkling and Lamar; I have heard them on down to the humblest in the land. But I prefer to give you a scrap of one which occurred in my own native mountains. It was a race for the Legislature in a mountain

county, between a straight Democrat and a straight Republican. The mountaineers had gathered at the county site to witness the great debate. The Republican spoke first. He was about six feet two in his socks, as slim as a bean pole, with a head about the size of an ordinary tin cup and very bald, and he lisped. Webster in all his glory in the United States Senate never appeared half so great or half so wise. Thus he opened the debate:

“F-e-l-l-o-w T-h-i-t-i-t-h-e-n-s: I come befo’ you to-day ath a Republikin candidate, fer to reprethent you in the lower branch uv the Leg-ithlachah. And, fellow thitithens, ef I thould thay thumpthin conthernin’ my own carreckter, I hope you will excuthe me. I sprung frum one of the humbletht cabins in all thith lovely land uv thweet liberty; and many a mornin’ I have jumped out uv my little trundle bed onto the puncheon floor, and pulled the splinterth and the bark off uv the wall of our ’umble cabin, for to make a fire for my weakley parenth. Fellow thitithenth, I never had no chanthe. All that I am to-day I owe to my own egtherthionth!! and that aint all. When the cloud of war thwept like a bethom of destructhion over this

land uv thweet liberty, me and my connecthion thouldered our musketh and marched forth on the bloody battlefield to fight for your thweet liberty! Fellow thitithenth, if you can trust me in the capathity uv a tholjer, caint you trust me in the capathity uv the Legithlature? I ask my old Dimocrat competitor for to tell you whar he wath when war shook thith continent from its thenter to its circumputh! I have put thith queththion to him on every stump, and he's ath thilent ath an oysthter. Fellow citithenth, I am a Republikin from printhiple. I believe in every thing the Republikin Party has ever done, and every thing the Republikin Party ever expecthts to do. Fellow thitithenth, I am in favor of a high protective tarriff for the protecthion of our infant induthtreth which are only a hundred yearth old; and fellow thitithenth, I am in favor of paying of a penthun to every tholjer that fit in the Federal army, while he lives, and after hethe dead, I'm in favor of paying uv it to hith Exthecutor or hith Adminithtrator."

He took his seat amid great applause on the Republican side of the house, and the old Democrat who was a much older man, came forward

like a roaring lion, to join issue in the great debate, and thus he “joined:”

“Feller Citerzuns, I come afore you as a Dimocrat canderdate, fur to ripresent you in the lower branch of the house of the Ligislator. And fust and fomust, hit becomes my duty fer to tell you whar I stand on the great queshtuns which is now a-agitatin’ of the public mind! Fust an’ fomust, feller citerzuns, I am a Dimocrat inside an’ out, u one side an’ down tother, independent defatigly. My competitor axes me whar I wuz endurin’ the war——Hit’s none uv his bizness whar I wuz. He says he wuz a-fightin’ fer yore sweet liberty. Ef he didn’t have no more sense than to stand before them-thar drotted bung shells an’ cannon, that’s his bizness, an’ hit’s my bizness whar I wuz. I think I have answered him on that pint.

Now, feller citerzuns, I’ll tell you what I’m fur. I am in favor uv payin’ off this-here drotted tariff an’ stoppin’ of it; an’ I’m in favor of collectin’ jist enuf of rivenue fur to run the Government ekernomical administered, accordin’ to Andy Jackson an’ the Dimocrat flatform. My competitor never told you that he got wounded endurin’ the war. Whar did he git hit at?

That's the pint in this canvass. He got it in the back, a-leadin' of the revance guard on the retreat—that's whar he got it."

This charge precipitated a personal encounter between the candidates, and the meeting broke up in a general battle, with brickbats and tan bark flying in the air.

It would be difficult, for those reared amid the elegancies and refinements of life in city and town, to appreciate the enjoyments of the gatherings and merry-makings of the great masses of the people who live in the rural districts of our country. The historian records the deeds of the great; he consigns to fame the favored few; but leaves unwritten the short and simple annals of the poor—the lives and actions of the millions.

The modern millionaire, as he sweeps through our valleys and around our hills in his palace car, ought not to look with derision on the cabins of America, for from their thresholds have come more brains and courage and true greatness than ever emanated from all the palaces of this world.

The fiddle, the rifle, the axe, and the Bible, symbolizing music, prowess, labor, and free religion, the four grand forces of our civilization, were the trusty friends and faithful allies of our

pioneer ancestry in subduing the wilderness and erecting the great Commonwealths of the Republic. Wherever a son of freedom pushed his perilous way into the savage wilds and erected his log cabin, these were the cherished penates of his humble domicile—the rifle in the rack above the door, the axe in the corner, the Bible on the table, and the fiddle with its streamers of ribbon, hanging on the wall. Did he need the charm of music, to cheer his heart, to scatter sunshine, and drive away melancholy thoughts, he touched the responsive strings of his fiddle and it burst into laughter. Was he beset by skulking savages, or prowling beasts of prey, he rushed to his deadly rifle for protection and relief. Had he the forest to fell, and the fields to clear, his trusty axe was in his stalwart grasp. Did he need the consolation, the promises and precepts of religion to strengthen his faith, to brighten his hope, and to anchor his soul to God and heaven, he held sweet communion with the dear old Bible.

The glory and strength of the Republic to-day are its plain working people.

**"Princes and Lords may flourish and may fade,
A breath can make them, as a breath has made;**

But an honest yeomanry—a Country's pride,
When once destroyed, can never be supplied;"

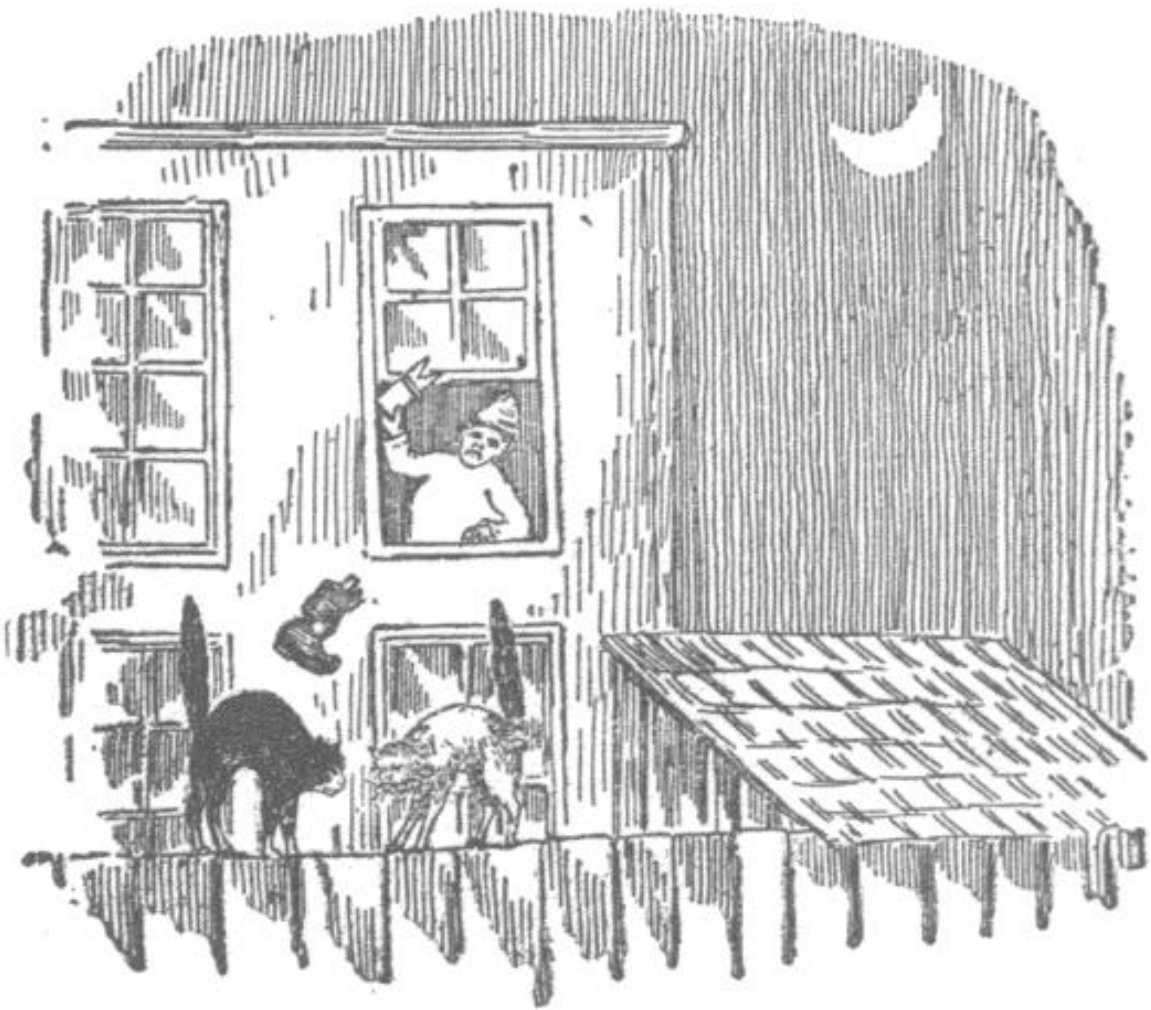
Long live the common people of America!
Long live the fiddle and the bow, the symbols
of their mirth and merriment!

THE TWO COLUMNS.

Music woos, and leads the human race ever onward, and there are two columns that follow her. One is the happy column, ringing with laughter and song. Its line of march is strewn with roses; it is hedged on either side by happy homes and smiling faces. The other is the column of sorrow, moaning with suffering and distress. I saw an aged mother with her white locks and wrinkled face, swoon at the Governor's feet; I saw old men tottering on the staff, with broken hearts and tear stained faces, and heard them plead for their wayward boys. I saw a wife and seven children, clad in rags, and barefooted, in mid-winter, fall upon their knees around him who held the pardoning power. I saw a little girl climb upon the Governor's knee, and put her arms around his neck; I heard her ask him if he had little girls; then I saw her sob upon his bosom as though her little heart would break, and heard her plead for mercy for her poor, miserable, wretched, convict father.

I saw want, and woe, and poverty, and trouble, and distress, and suffering, and agony, and anguish, march in solemn procession before the Gubernatorial door; and I said: "Let the critics frown and rail, let this heartless world condemn, but he who hath power and doth not temper justice with mercy, will cry in vain himself for mercy on that great day when the two columns shall meet! For, thank God, the stream of happy humanity that rolls on like a gleaming river, and the stream of the suffering and distressed and ruined of this earth, both empty into the same great ocean of eternity and mingle like the waters, and there is a God who shall judge the merciful and the unmerciful!"

THERE IS A MELODY FOR EVERY EAR.



THE MID-NIGHT SERENADE.

The multitudinous harmonies of this world differ in pathos and pitch as the stars differ, one from another, in glory. There is a style for every taste, a melody for every ear. The

gabble of geese is music to the goose; the hoot of the hoot-owl is lovelier to his mate than the nightingale's lay; the concert of Signor "Tommaso Cataleny" and Mademoiselle "Pussy" awakeneth the growling old bachelor from his dreams, and he throweth his boquets of boot-jacks and superannuated foot gear.

The peripatetic gentleman from Italy asks no loftier strain than the tune of his hand organ and the jingle of the nickels, "the tribute of the Cæsars."

The downy-lipped boy counts the explosion of a kiss on the cheek of his darling "dul-ci-ni-a del To-bo-so" sweeter than an echo from paradise; and it is said that older folks like its music.

The tintinnabulations of the wife's curtain lecture are too precious to the enraptured husband to be shared with other ears. And in the hush of the bed-time hour, when tired daddies are seeking repose in the oblivion of sleep, the unearthly bangs on the grand piano below in the parlor, and the unearthly screams and yells of the budding prima donna, as she sings to her admiring beau:



"Men may come and men may go, but



I go on 'for - ev-oor' 'ev-oor'



I go on 'for - e v - o - o - r' 'e - v - o - o - r'



I go on 'for - ev - o o r . ' "

It is a thing of beauty, and a "nightmare" forever.

MUSIC IS THE WINE OF THE SOUL.

Music is the wine of the soul. It is the exhilaration of the palace; it is the joy of the humblest home; it sparkles and glows in the banquet hall; it is the inspiration of the church. Music inspires every gradation of humanity, from the orangoutang and the cane-sucking dude with the single eye glass, *up to man*.

There was "a sound of revelry by night," where youth and beauty were gathered in the excitement of the raging ball. The ravishing music of the orchestra charmed from the street a red nosed old knight of the demijohn, and uninvited he staggered into the brilliant assemblage and made an effort to get a partner for the next set. Failing in this, he concluded to exhibit his powers as a dancer; and galloped around the hall till he galloped into the arms of a strong man who quickly ushered him to the head of the stairs, and gave him a kick and a push; he went revolving down to the street below and fell flat on his back in the mud; but "truth crushed to earth will rise

again!” He rose, and standing with his back against a lamp post, he looked up into the faces that were gazing down, and said in an injured tone: “Gentlemen, (hic) you may be able to fool some people, but, (hic) you can’t fool me, (hic) I know what made you kick me down them stairs, (hic, hic). You don’t want me up there—that’s the reason!” So, life hath its discords as well as its harmonies.

There was music in the magnificent parlor of a modern Chesterfield. It was thronged with elegant ladies and gentlemen. The daughter of the happy household was playing and singing Verdi’s “Ah! I have sighed to rest me;” the fond mother was turning the pages; the fond father was sighing and resting up stairs, in a state of innocuous desuetude, produced by the “music” of old Kentucky Bourbon; but he could not withstand the power of the melody below. Quickly he donned his clothing; he put his vest on over his coat; put his collar on hind side foremost; buttoned the lower buttonhole of his coat on the top button, stood before the mirror and arranged his hair, and started down to see the ladies and listen to the music. But he stumped his toe at the top of the stairs, and slid down

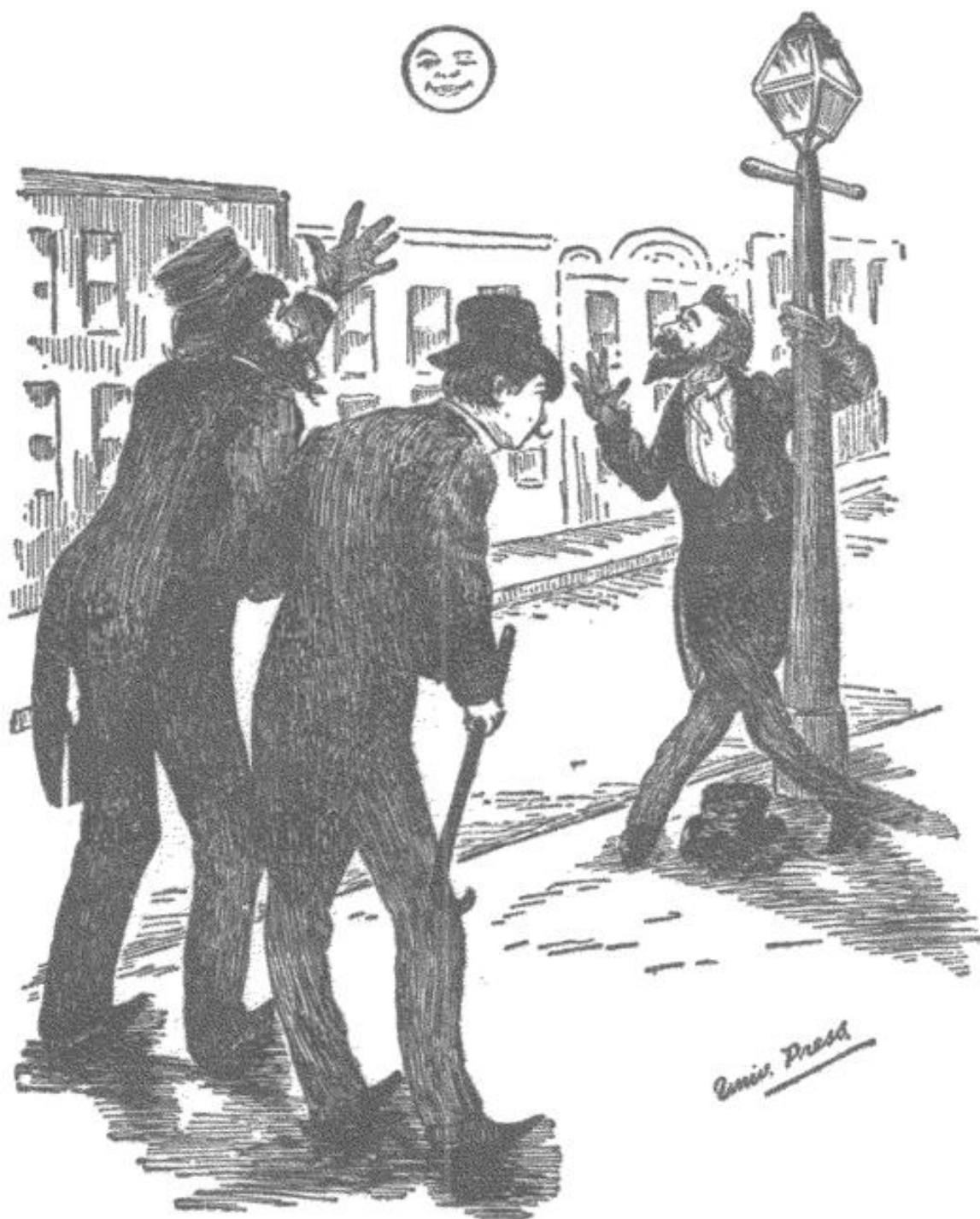
**MR. "RICKETY."**

head-foremost, and turned a somersault into the midst of the astonished ladies. The ladies screamed and helped him to his feet, all crying at once: “Are you hurt Mr. ‘Rickety’—are you hurt?” Standing with his back against the piano he exclaimed in an assuring tone: “Why, (hic) of course not ladies, go on with your music, (hic) that’s the way I always come down ——!

Two old banqueters banqueted at a banquet. They banqueted all night long, and kept the banquet up together all the next day after the banquet had ended. They kept up their banqueting a week after the banquet was over. But they got separated one morning and met again in the afternoon. One of them said: “Good mornin’!” The other said: “Good evenin’!” “Why;” said one, “It’s mornin’ an’ that’s the sun; I’ve investigated the queshtun.” “No-sir-ee,” said the other, “You’re mistaken, it’s late in the evenin’ an’ that’s the full moon.” They concluded they would have no difficulty about the matter, and agreed to leave it to the first gentleman they came to to settle the question. They locked arms and started down the street together; they staggered on till they came upon another gentleman in the same con-

dition, hanging on a lamp post. One of them approached him and said: “Friend (hic) we don’t desire to interfere with your meditation (hic) but this gen’lman says it’s mornin’ an’ that’s the sun; I say it’s evenin’ an’ that’s the full moon, (hic) we respectfully ask you (hic) to settle the question.” The fellow stood and looked at it for a full minute, and in his despair replied:

“Gen’lmen, (hic) you’ll have to excuse me, (hic) I’m a stranger in this town!”



AFTER THE BANQUET.

THE OLD TIME SINGING SCHOOL.

Did you never hear the music of the old time singing school? Oh! who can forget the old school house that stood on the hill? Who can forget the sweet little maidens with their pink sun bonnets and checkered dresses, the walks to the spring, and the drinks of pure, cold water from the gourd? Who can forget the old time courtships at the singing school? When the boy found an opportunity he wrote these tender lines to his sweetheart:

"The rose is red, the violet's blue—
Sugar is sweet, and so are you."

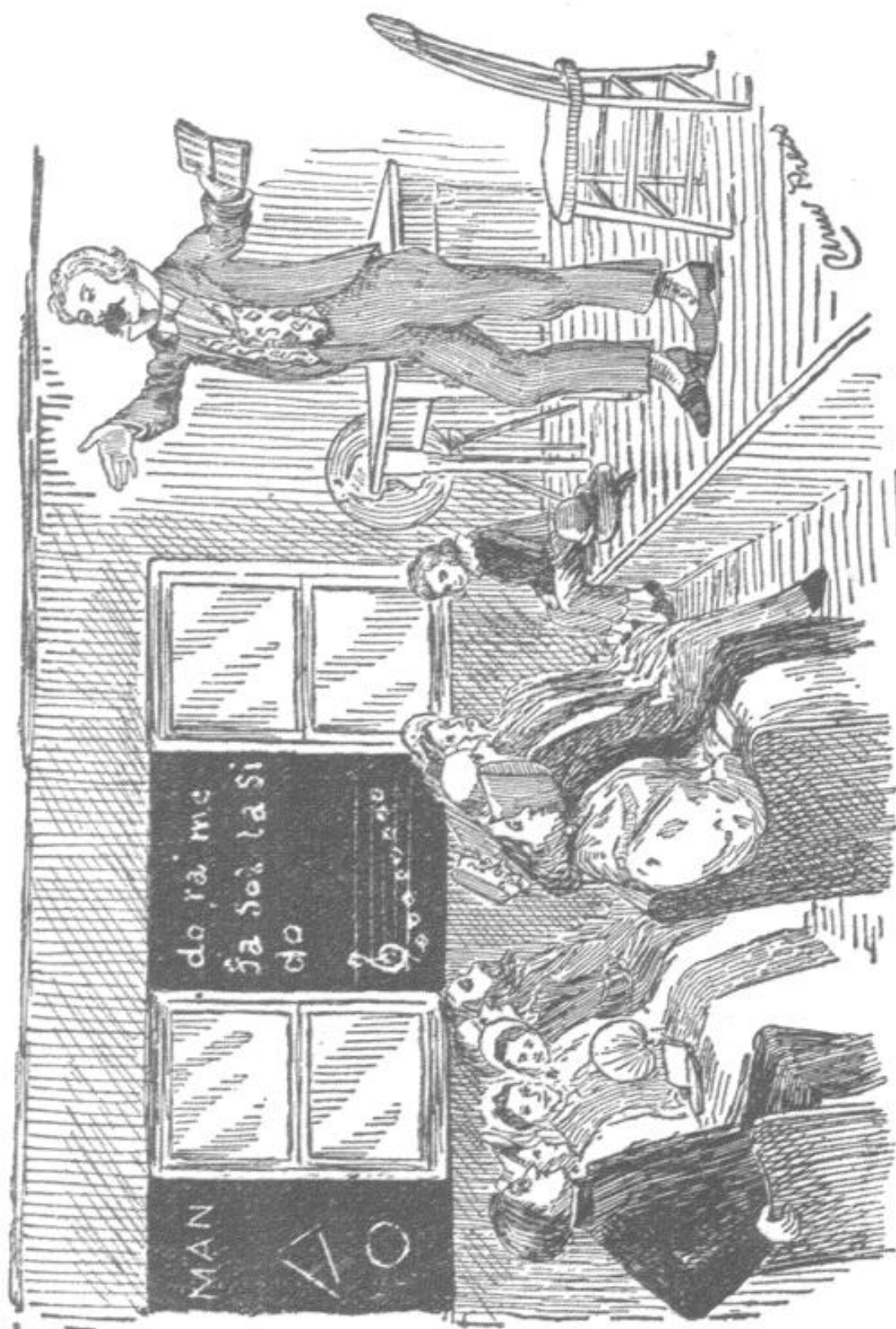
She read it and blushed, and turned it over and wrote on the back of it:

"As sure as the vine clings 'round the stump,
I'll be your sweet little sugar lump."

Who can forget the old time singing master? The old time singing master with very light hair, a dyed mustache, a wart on his left eyelid, and with one game leg, was the pride of our rural society; he was the envy of man and the idol of woman. His baggy trousers, sev-

eral inches too short, hung above his toes like the inverted funnels of a Cunard steamer. His butternut coat had the abbreviated appearance of having been cut in deep water, and its collar encircled the back of his head like the belts of Jupiter and the rings of Saturn. His vest resembled the aurora borealis, and his voice was a cross between a cane mill and the bray of an ass. Yet beautiful and bright he stood before the ruddy-faced swains and rose-cheeked lassies of the country, conscious of his charms, and proud of his great ability. He had prepared, after a long and tedious research of Webster's unabridged dictionary, a speech which he always delivered to his class.

“Boys and girls,” he would say, “Music is a conglomeration of pleasing sounds, or a succession or combernation of simultaneous sounds modulated in accordance with harmony. Harmony is the sociability of two or more musical strains. Melody denotes the pleasing combustion of musical and measured sounds, as they succeed each other in transit. The elements of vocal music consist of seven original tones which constitute the diatonic scale, together with its steps and half steps, the whole being compro-



THE SINGING MASTER DELIVERING HIS GREAT SPEECH.

mised in ascending notes and half notes, thus:

Do re mi fa sol la si do—

Do si la sol fa mi re do.

Now, the diapason is the ad interium, or interval betwixt and between the extremes of an octave, according to the diatonic scale. The turns of music consist of the appoggiatura which is the principal note, or that on which the turn is made, together with the note above and the semi-tone below, the note above being sounded first, the principal note next and the semi-tone below, last, the three being performed staccato, or very quickly. Now, if you will keep these simple propositions clear in your physical mind, there is no power under the broad canopy of heaven which can prevent you from becoming succinctly contaminated with the primary and elementary rudiments of music. With these few sanguinary remarks we will now proceed to diagnosticate the exercises of the mornin' hour. Please turn to page thirty-four of the Southern harmony.” And we turned. “You will discover that this beautiful piece of music is written in four-four time, beginning on the downward beat. Now, take the sound—sol mi do—All in unison—one, two, three, *sing*:



BEATING TIME.

THE GRAND OPERA.

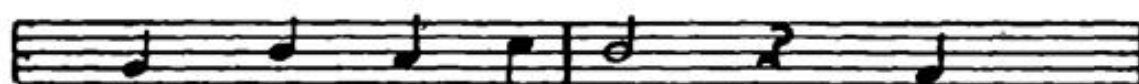


I heard a great Italian Tenor sing in the Grand Opera, and Oh! how like the dew on the flowers is the memory of his song! He was playing the role of a broken-hearted lover in the opera of the "Bohemian Girl." I can only repeat it as it impressed me — an humble young man from the mountains who never before had heard the *Grand Opera*:

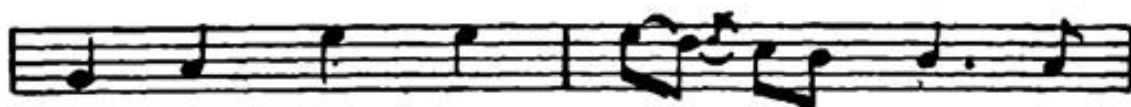
THE GRAND OPERA SINGER.



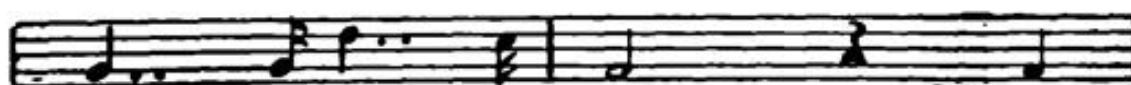
"When ethaer-r-r leeps and ethaer-r-r hairts. Their-r-r



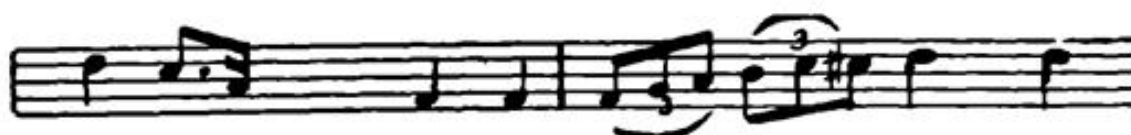
tales auf luff shall tell, In



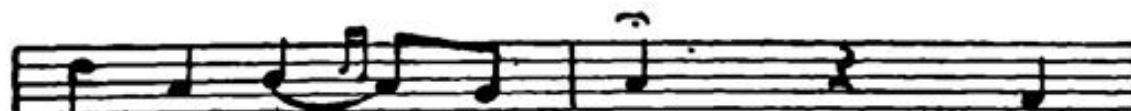
longwidge whose ex - cess impair-r-r-ts The



power-r-r-r they feel so well, There-r-r-e



may per - haps in-a such a s-c-e-n-e Some



r-r-re-co - lec - tion be, Auf



days thot haive as hop - py bean— Then

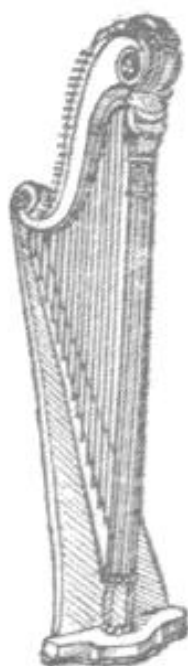


you'll-a r-r-r-re-mem-b-a-e-r-r-r me-e-e, Then you'll-a-r-re-



mem-b-a-e-r-r, You'll-a r-re-mem-ber a-me-e-e!!"

MUSIC.



The spirit of music, like an archangel, presides over mankind and the visible creation. Her afflatus, divinely sweet, divinely powerful, is breathed on every human heart, and inspires every soul to some nobler sentiment, some higher thought, some greater action.

O music, sweetest, sublimest ideal of Omniscience, first-born of God, fairest and loftiest Seraph of the celestial hierarchy, Muse of the beautiful, daughter of the Universe!

In the morning of eternity, when the stars were young, her first grand oratorio burst upon raptured Deity, and thrilled the wondering angels; all heaven shouted; ten thousand times ten thousand jeweled harps, ten thousand times ten thousand angel tongues caught up the song; and ever since, through all the golden cycles, its breathing melodies, old as eternity, yet ever

new as the flitting hours, have floated on the air of heaven. The Seraph stood, with outstretched wings, on the horizon of heaven—clothed in light, ablaze with gems; and with voice attuned, swept her burning harp strings, and lo! the blue infinite thrilled with her sweetest note. The trembling stars heard it, and flashed their joy from every flaming center. The wheeling orbs that course their paths of light were vibrant with the strain, and pealed it back into the glad ear of God. The far off milky way, bright gulf-stream of astral glories, spanning the ethereal deep, resounded with its harmonies, and the star-dust isles floating in that river of opal, re-echoed the happy chorus from every sparkling strand.



“THE PARADISE OF FOOLS.”

Have you ever thought of the wealth that perished when paradise was lost? Have you ever thought of the glory of Eden, the first estate of man? I think it was the very dream of God, glowing with ineffable beauty. I think it was rimmed with blue mountains, from whose moss-covered cliffs leaped a thousand glassy streams that spread out in mid-air, like bridal veils, kissing a thousand rainbows from the sun. I think it was an archipelago of gorgeous colors, flecked with green isles, where the grapevine staggered from tree to tree, as if drunk with the wine of its own purple clusters, where peach, and plum, and blood-red cherries, and every kind of berry, bent bough and bush, and shone like showered drops of ruby and of pearl. I think it was a wilderness of flowers, redolent of eternal spring and pulsing with bird-song, where dappled fawns played on banks of violets, where leopards, peaceful and tame, lounged in copses of magnolias, where harmless

tigers lay on snowy beds of lilies, and lions, lazy and gentle, panted in jungles of roses. I think its billowy landscapes were festooned with tangling creepers, bright with perennial bloom, and curtained with sweet-scented groves, where the orange and the pomegranate hung like golden globes and ruddy moons. I think its air was softened with the dreamy haze of perpetual summer; and through its midst there flowed a translucent river, alternately gleaming in its sunshine and darkening in its shadows. And there, in some sweet, dusky bower, fresh from the hand of his Creator, slept Adam, the first of the human race; God-like in form and feature; God-like in all the attributes of mind and soul. No monarch ever slept on softer, sweeter couch, with richer curtains drawn about him. And as he slept, a face and form, half hidden, half revealed, red-lipped, rose-cheeked, white bosomed and with tresses of gold, smiled like an angel from the mirror of his dream; for a moment smiled, and so sweetly, that his heart almost forgot to beat. And while yet this bright vision still haunted his slumber, with tenderest touch an unseen hand lay open the unconscious flesh in his side, and forth from the painless wound a

faultless being sprang; a being pure and blithe-some as the air; a sinless woman, God's first thought for the happiness of man. I think he wooed her at the waking of the morning. I think he wooed her at noon-tide, down by the river-side, or by the spring in the dell. I think he wooed her at twilight, when the moon silvered the palm tree's feathery plumes, and the stars looked down, and the nightingale sang. And wherever he wooed her, I think the grazing herds left sloping hill and peaceful vale, to listen to the wooing, and thence themselves, departed in pairs. The covies heard it and mated in the fields; the quail wooed his love in the wheat; the robin whistled to his love in the glen;

“The lark was so brim-full of gladness and love,
The green fields below him—the blue sky above,
That he sang, and he sang, and forever sang he:
I love my Love, and my Love loves me.”

Love songs bubbled from the mellow throats of mocking-birds and bobolinks; dove cooed love to dove; and I think the maiden monkey, fair “Juliet” of the House of Orang-outang, waited on her cocoanut balcony for the coming of her “Romeo,” and thus plaintively sang:



JULIET.

(Sung to the air of My Sweetheart's the Man in the Moon.)

"My sweetheart's the lovely baboon,
I'm going to marry him soon;
'Twould fill me with joy

Just to kiss the dear boy,
For his charms and his beauty
No power can destroy."

"I'll sit it the light of the moon,
And sing to my darling baboon,
When I'm safe by his side
And he calls me his bride;
Oh! my Angel, my precious baboon!"

All paradise was imbued
with the spirit of love. Oh,
that it could have remaine



ROMEO.

so forever! There was not a painted cheek in Eden, nor a bald head, nor a false tooth, nor a bachelor. There was not a flounce, nor a frill, nor a silken gown, nor a flashy waist with *auro-ra borealis* sleeves. There was not a curl paper, nor even a threat of crinoline. Raiment was an after thought, the mask of a tainted soul, born of original sin. Beauty was unmarred by gaudy rags; Eve was dressed in sunshine, Adam was clad in climate.

Every rich blessing within the gift of the Almighty Father was poured out from the cornucopia of heaven, into the lap of paradise. But it was a paradise of fools, because they stained it with disobedience and polluted it with sin. It was the paradise of fools because, in the exercise of their own God-given free agency, they tasted the forbidden fruit and fell from their glorious estate. Oh, what a fall was there! It was the fall of innocence and purity; it was the fall of happiness into the abyss of woe; it was the fall of life into the arms of death. It was like the fall of the wounded albatross, from the regions of light, into the sea; it was like the fall of a star from heaven to hell. When the jasper gate forever closed behind the guilty pair, and the

flaming sword of the Lord mounted guard over the barred portal, the whole life-current of the human race was shifted into another channel; shifted from the roses to the thorns; shifted from joy to sorrow, and it bore upon its dark and turbulent bosom, the wrecked hopes of all the ages.

I believe they lost intellectual powers which fallen man has never regained. Operating by the consent of natural laws, sinless man would have wrought endless miracles. The mind, winged like a seraph, and armed like a thunderbolt, would have breached the very citadel of knowledge and robbed it of its treasures. I think they lost a plane of being only a little lower than the angels. I believe they lost youth, beauty, and physical immortality. I believe they lost the virtues of heart and soul, and many of the magnificent powers of mind, which made them the images of God, and which would have even brushed aside the now impenetrable veil which hides from mortal eyes the face of Infinite Love; that Love which gave the ever-blessed light, and filled the earth with music of bird, and breeze, and sea; that Love whose melodies we sometimes faintly catch, like spirit voices,

from the souls of orators and poets; that Love which inlaid the arching firmament of heaven with jewels sparkling with eternal fires. But thank God, their fall was not like the remediless fall of Lucifer and his angels, into eternal darkness. Thank God, in this “night of death” hope *does* see a star! It is the star of Bethlehem. Thank God, “listening Love” *does* “hear the rustle of a wing!” It is the wing of the resurrection angel.

The memories and images of paradise lost have been impressed on every human heart, and every individual of the race has his own ideal of that paradise, from the cradle to the grave. But that ideal in so far as its realization in this world is concerned, is like the rainbow, an elusive phantom, ever in sight, never in reach, resting ever on the horizon of hope.

THE PARADISE OF CHILDHOOD.

I saw a blue-eyed child, with sunny curls, toddling on the lawn before the door of a happy home. He toddled under the trees, prattling to the birds and playing with the ripening apples that fell upon the ground. He toddled among the roses and plucked their leaves as he would have plucked an angel's wing, strewing their glory upon the green grass at his feet. He chased the butterflies from flower to flower, and shouted with glee as they eluded his grasp and sailed away on the summer air. Here I thought his childish fancy had built a paradise and peopled it with dainty seraphim and made himself its Adam. He saw the sunshine of Eden glint on every leaf and beam in every petal. The flitting honey-bee, the wheeling June-bug, the fluttering breeze, the silvery pulse-beat of the dashing brook sounded in his ear notes of its swelling music. The iris-winged humming-bird, darting like a sunbeam, to kiss the pouting lips



THE PARADISE OF CHILDHOOD.

of the upturned flowers was, to him, the impersonation of its beauty. And I said: Truly, this is the nearest approach in this world, to the paradise of long ago. Then I saw him skulking like a cupid, in the shrubbery, his skirts bedraggled and soiled, his face downcast with guilt. He had stirred up the Mediterranean Sea in the slop bucket, and waded the Atlantic Ocean in a mud puddle. He had capsized the goslings, and shipwrecked the young ducks, and drowned the kitten which he imagined a whale, and I said: *There* is the original Adam coming to the surface.

"Lo'd bless my soul! Jist look at dat chile!" shouted his dusky old nurse, as she lifted him, dripping, from the reeking pond. "What's you bin doin' in dat mud puddle? Look at dat face, an' dem hands an' close, all kivvered wid mud an' mulberry juice! You bettah not let yo' mammy see you while you's in dat fix. You's gwine to ketch it sho'. You's jist zackly like yo' fader—allers git'n into some scrape or nuddah, allers breakin' into some kind uv devilment—gwine to break into congrus some uv dese days sho'. Come along wid me dis instinct to de baff tub. I's a-gwine to dispurgate

dem close an' 'lucidate some uv dat dirt off'n dat face uv yone, you triflin' rascal you!" And so saying, she carried him away, kicking and screaming like a young savage in open rebellion, and I said: *There* is some more of the original Adam. Then I saw him come forth again, washed and combed, and dressed in spotless white, like a young butterfly fresh from its chrysalis. And when he got a chance, I saw him slip on his tip-toes, into the pantry;

I heard the clink of glassware,
As if a mouse were playing there,

among the jam pots and preserves. There two little dimpled hands made trip after trip to a rose-colored mouth, bearing burdens of mingling sweets that dripped from cheek, and chin, and waist, and skirt, and shoes, subduing the snowy white with the amber of the peach, and the purple of the raspberry, as he ate the forbidden fruit. Then I watched him glide into the drawing room. There was a crash and a thud in there, which quickly brought his frightened mother to the scene, only to find the young rascal standing there catching his breath, while streams of cold ink trickled down his drenched bosom. And as he wiped his inky face, which

**PARADISE LOST.**

grew blacker with every wipe, the remainder of the ink was pouring from the bottle down on the carpet, and making a map of darkest Africa. Then the rear of a small skirt went up over a curly head and the avenging slipper, in lightning strokes, kept time to the music in the air. And I said: *There is "Paradise Lost."* The sympathizing, half angry old nurse bore her weeping, sobbing charge to the nursery and there bound up his broken heart and soothed him to sleep with her old time lullaby:

"Oh, don't you cry little baby, Oh, don't you cry no mo',
For it hurts ol' mammy's feelin's fo' to heah you weepin'
so.

Why don't da keep temptation frum de little han's an' feet?
What makes 'em 'buse de baby kaze de jam an' zarves am
sweet?

Oh, de sorrow, tribulations, dat de joys of mortals break,
Oh, it's heb'n when we slumber, it's trouble when we wake.

Oh, go to sleep my darlin', now close dem little eyes,
An' dream uv de shinin' angels, an' de blessed paradise;
Oh, dream uv de blood-red roses, an' de birds on snowy
wing;

Oh, dream uv de fallin' watahs an' de never endin' spring.

Oh, de roses, Oh, de rainbows, Oh, de music's gentle swell,
In de dreamland uv little childun, whar de blessed sperrits
dwell."

"Dar now, dar now, he's gone. Bless its little heart, da treats it like a dog." And then

**OLD BLACK "MAMMY."**

she tucked him away in the paradise of his childish slumber.

The day will come when the South will build a monument to the good old black mammy of the past for the lullabies she has sung.

I sometimes wish that childhood might last forever. That sweet fairy land on the frontier of life, whose skies are first lighted with the sunrise of the soul, and in whose bright-tinted jungles the lions, and leopards, and tigers of passion still peacefully sleep. The world is disarmed by its innocence, the drawn bow is relaxed, and the arrow is returned to its quiver; the *Ægis* of Heaven is above it, the outstretched wings of mercy, pity, and measureless love!

THE PARADISE OF THE BAREFOOTED BOY.



I would rather be a barefooted boy with cheeks of tan and heart of joy than to be a millionaire and president of a National bank. The financial panic that falls like a thunderbolt, wrecks the bank, crushes the banker, and swamps thousands in an hour. But the bank which holds the treasures of the barefooted boy never breaks. With his satchel and his books he hies away to school in the morning, but his truant feet carry him the other way, to the mill pond "a-fishin'." And there he sits the livelong day under the shade of the tree, with sapling pole and pin hook, and fishes, and fishes, and fishes, and waits for a nibble of the drowsy sucker that sleeps on his oozy bed, oblivious of the baitless hook from which he has long since stolen the worm. There he sits, and fishes,

THE PARADISE OF THE BAREFOOTED BOY.



and fishes, and fishes, and like Micawber, waits for something to "turn-up." But nothing turns up until the shadows of evening fall and warn the truant home, where he is welcomed with a dogwood sprout. Then "sump'n" *does* turn up. He obeys the call of the Sunday school bell, and goes with solemn face, but e'er the "sweet bye and bye" has died away on the summer air, he is in the wood shed playing Sullivan and Corbett with some plucky comrade, with the inevitable casualties of *one* closed eye, *one* crippled nose, *one* pair of torn breeches and *one* bloody toe. He takes a back seat at church, and in the midst of the sermon steals away and hides in the barn to smoke cigarettes and read the story of "One-eyed Pete, the Hero of the *wild* and *woolly* West." There is eternal war between the barefooted boy and the whole civilized world. He shoots the cook with a blow-gun; he cuts the strings of the hammock and lets his dozing grandmother fall to the ground; he loads his grandfather's pipe with powder; he instigates a fight between the cat and dog during family prayers, and explodes with laughter when pussy seeks refuge on the old man's back. He hides in the alley and turns

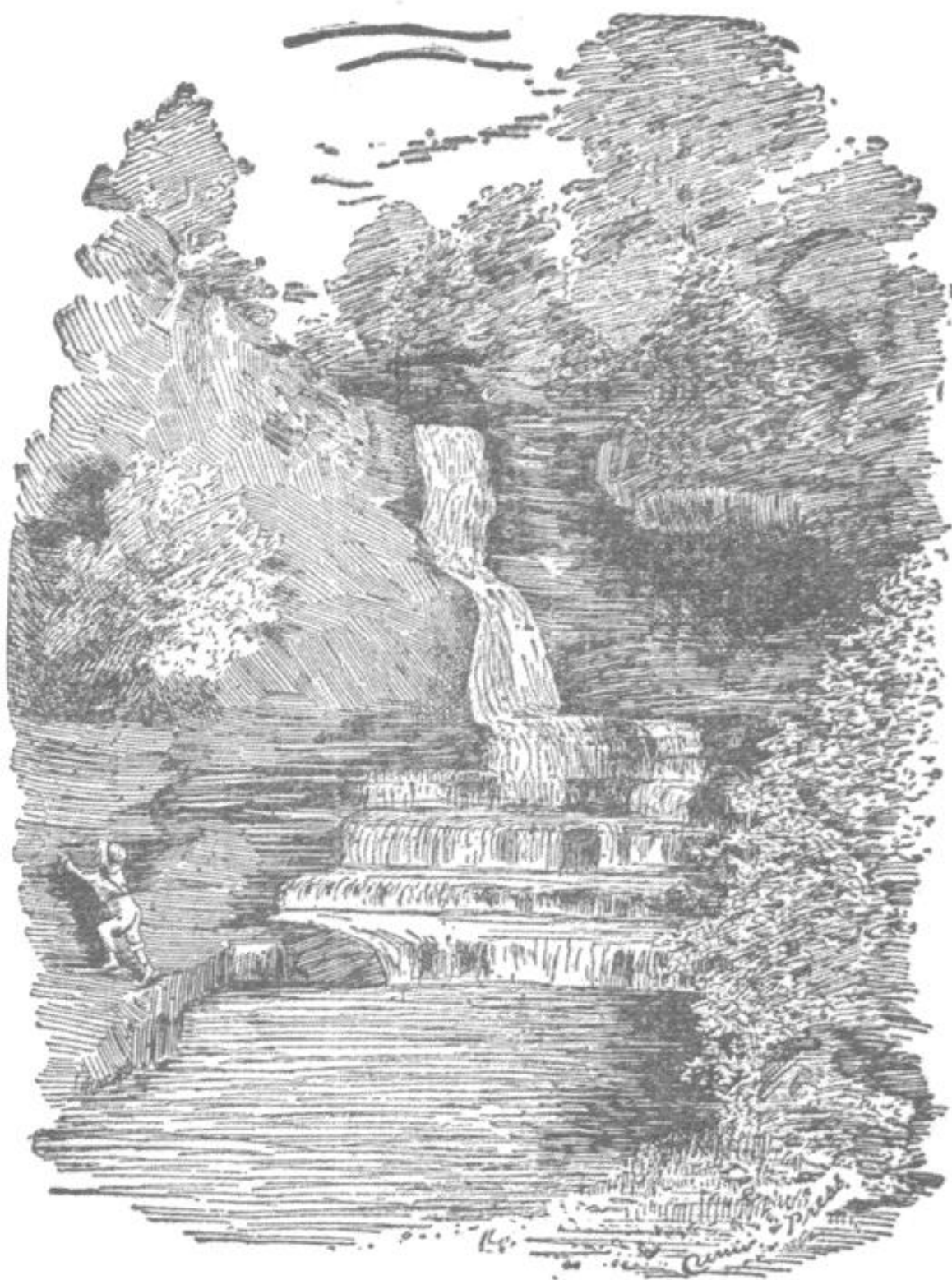
the hose on uncle Ephraim's standing collar as he passes on his way to church, he cracks chestnut burrs with his naked heel; he robs birds' nests, and murders bullfrogs, and plays "knucks" and "base-ball." He puts asafetida in the soup, and conceals lizzards in his father's hat. He overwhelms the family circle with his magnificent literary attainments when he reads from the Bible in what he calls the "pasalms of David"—"praise ye the Lord with the pizeltry and the harp."

His father took him to town one day and said to him: "Now John, I want you to stay here on the corner with the wagon and watch these potatoes while I go round the square and see if I can sell them. Don't open your mouth sir, while I am gone; I'm afraid people will think you're a fool." While the old man was gone the merchant came out and said to John: "What are those potatoes worth, my son?" John looked at him and grinned. "What are those potatoes worth, I say?" asked the merchant. John still looked at him and grinned. The merchant turned on his heel and said: "You're a fool," and went back into his store. When the old man returned John shouted: "Pap,

they found it out and I never said a word."

His life is an endless chain of pranks and pleasures. Look how the brawling brook pours down the steep declivities of the mountain gorge! Here it breaks into pearls and silvery foam, there it dashes in rapids, among brown bowlders, and yonder it tumbles from the gray crest of a precipice. Thus, forever laughing, singing, rollicking, romping, till it is checked in its mad rush and spreads into a still, smooth mirror, reflecting the inverted images of rock, and fern, and flower, and tree, and sky. It is the symbol of the life of a barefooted boy. His quips, and cranks, his whims, and jollities, and jocund mischief, are but the effervescences of exuberant young life, the wild music of the mountain stream.

If I were a sculptor, I would chisel from the marble my ideal of the monumental fool. I would make it the figure of a man, with knitted brow and clinched teeth, beating and bruising his barefooted boy, in the cruel endeavor to drive him from the paradise of his childish fun and folly. If your boy *will* be a boy, let him be a boy still. And remember that he is following the paths which your feet have trodden, and will soon



THE WILD MUSIC OF THE MOUNTAINS.

look back upon its precious memories, as you now do, with the aching heart of a care-worn man.

(Sung to the air of Down on the Farm.)

Oh, I love the dear old farm, and my heart grows young
and warm,

When I wander back to spend a single day;
There to hear the robins sing in the trees around the
spring,

Where I used to watch the happy children play.
Oh, I hear their voices yet, and I never shall forget
How their faces beamed with childish mirth and glee.
But my heart grows old again and I leave the spot in pain,
When I call them and no answer comes to me.

THE PARADISE OF YOUTH.



THE PARADISE OF YOUTH.

manhood. Did you never observe him shaving

If childhood is the sunrise of life, youth is the heyday of life's ruddy June. It is the sweet solstice in life's early summer, which puts forth the fragrant bud and blossom of sin e'er its bitter fruits ripen and turn to ashes on the lips of age. It is the happy transition period, when long legs, and loose joints, and verdant awkwardness, first stumble on the vestibule of

and scraping his pimpled face till it resembled a featherless goose, reaping nothing but lather, and dirt, and a little intangible fuzz? That is the first symptom of love. Did you never observe him wrestling with a pair of boots two numbers too small, as Jacob wrestled with the angel? That is another symptom of love. His callous heel slowly and painfully yields to the pressure of his perspiring paroxysms until his feet are folded like fans and driven home in the pinching leather; and as he sits at church with them hid under the bench, his uneasy squirms are symptoms of the tortures of the infernal regions, and the worm that dieth not; but that is only the penalty of loving. When he begins to wander through the fragrant meadows and talk to himself among the buttercups and clover blossoms, it is a sure sign that the golden shaft of the winged god has sped from its bended bow. Love's archer has shot a poisoned arrow which wounds but never kills. The sweet venom has done its work. The fever of the amorous wound drives the red current bounding through his veins, and his brain now reels with the delirium of the tender passion. His soul is wrapped in visions of dreamy black eyes peep-

ing out from under raven curls, and cheeks like gardens of roses. To him the world is transformed into a blooming Eden, and *she* is its only Eve. He hears her voice in the sound of the laughing waters, the fluttering of her heart in the summer evening's last sigh that shuts the rose; and he sits on the bank of the river all day long and writes poetry to her. Thus he writes:

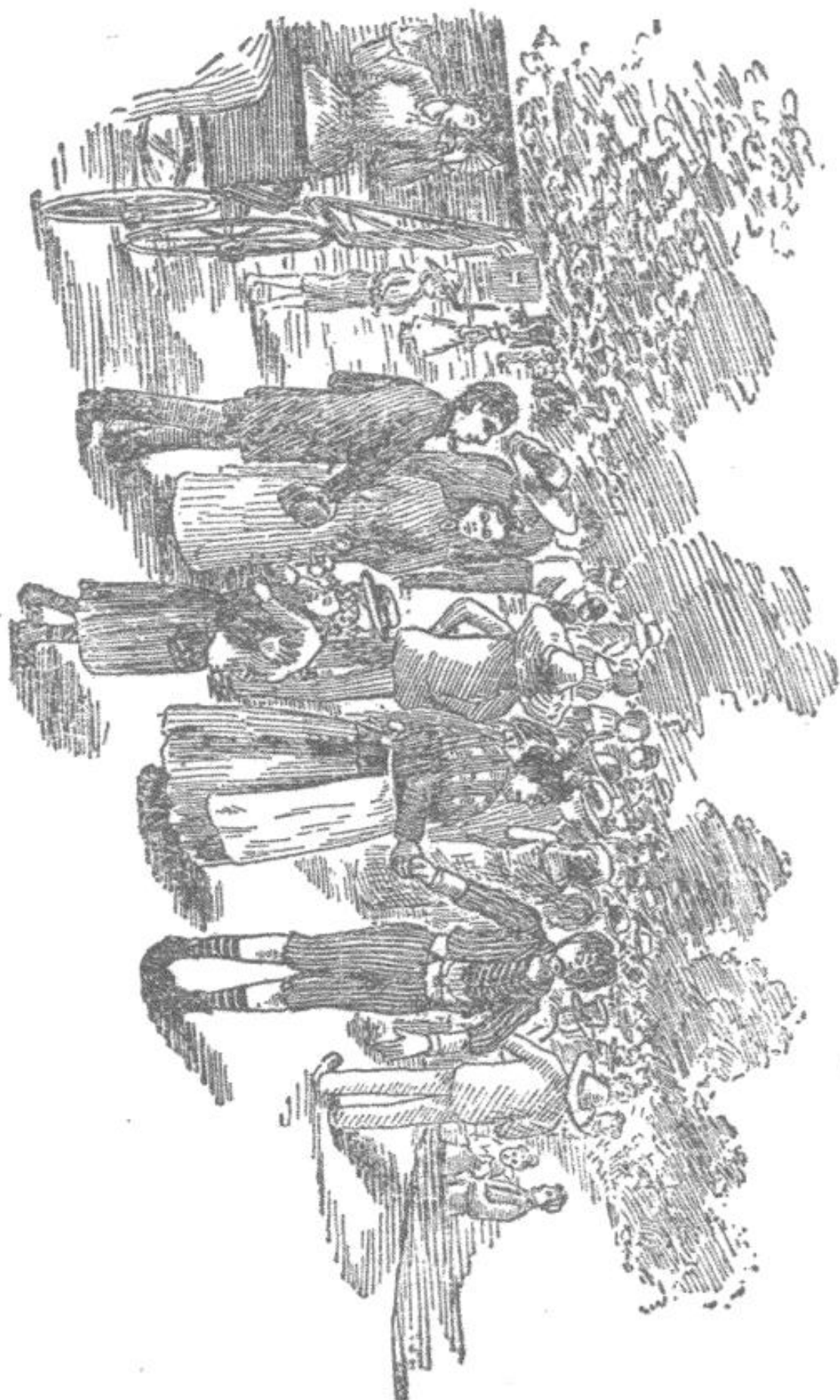
“As I sit by this river's crystal wave,
Whose flow'ry banks its waters lave,
Me-thinks I see in its glassy mirror,
A face which to me, than life is dearer.
Oh, 'tis the face of my Gwendolin,
As pure as an angel, free from sin.
It looks into mine with one sweet eye,
While the other is turned to the starry sky.
Could I the ocean's bulk contain,
Could I but drink the watery main,
I'd scarce be half as full of the sea,
As my heart is full of love for thee!”

Thus he lives and loves, and writes poetry by day, and tosses on his bed at night, like the restless sea, and dreams, and dreams, and dreams, until, in the ecstasy of his dream, he grabs a pillow.

One bright summer day, a rural youth took his sweetheart to a Baptist baptizing; and, in addition to his verdancy and his awkwardness, he stuttered most distressingly. The singing

began on the bank of the stream; and he left his sweetheart in the buggy, in the shade of a tree near by, and wandered alone in the crowd. Standing unconsciously among those who were to be baptized, the old parson mistook him for one of the converts, and seized him by the arm and marched him into the water. He began to protest: "ho-ho-hold on p-p-p-parson, y-y-y-you're ma-ma-makin' a mi-mi-mistake!!!" "Don't be alarmed my son, come right in," said the parson. And he led him to the middle of the stream. The poor fellow made one final desperate effort to explain—"p-p-p-p-parson, l-l-l-l-let me explain!" But the parson coldly said: "Close your mouth and eyes, my son!" And he soused him under the water. After he was thoroughly baptized the old parson led him to the bank, the muddy water trickling down his face. He was "diked" in his new seersucker suit, and when the sun struck it, it began to draw up. The legs of his pants drew up to his knees; his sleeves drew up to his elbows; his little sack coat yanked up under his arms. And as he stood there trembling and shivering, a good old sister approached him, and taking him by the hand said: "God bless you, my son,

THE STEERSUCKER YOUTH AT THE BAPTIZING.



how do you feel?" Looking, in his agony, at his blushing sweetheart behind her fan, he replied in his anguish: "I fe-fe-fe-feel 1-1-1-1-like a d-d-d-d-durned f-f-f-f-fool!"

If I were called upon to drink a toast to life's happiest period, I would hold up the sparkling wine, and say: "Here is to youth, that sweet, Seidlitz powder period, when two souls with scarcely a single thought, meet and blend in one; when a voice, half gosling, half calliope, rasps the first sickly confession of puppy love into the ear of a blue-sashed maiden at the picnic in the grove!" But when she returns his little greasy photograph, accompanied by a little perfumed note, expressing the hope that he will think of her only as a sister, his paradise is wrecked, and his puppy love is swept into the limbo of things that were, the school boy's tale, the wonder of an hour.

But wait till the shadows have a little longer grown. Wait till the young lawyer comes home from college, spouting Blackstone, and Kent, and Ram on facts. Wait till the young doctor returns from the university, with his whiskers and his diploma, to tread the paths of glory, "that lead but to the grave." Wait

till society gives welcome in the brilliant ball, and the swallow-tail coat, and the patent leather pumps whirl with the decollette and white slippers till the stars are drowning in the light of morning. Wait till the graduate staggers from the giddy hall, in full evening dress, singing as he staggers:

**"After the ball is over, after the break of morn,
After the dancer's leavin', after the stars are gone;
Many a heart is aching, if we could read
them all—
Many the hopes that are vanished, after
the ball."**



It is then that "somebody's darling" has reached the full tide of his glory as a fool.

AFTER THE BALL.

THE PARADISE OF HOME.

How rich would be the feast of happiness in this beautiful world of ours, could folly end with youth. But youth is only the first act in the "Comedy of Errors." It is the pearly gate that opens to the real paradise of fools.

"It's pleasures are like poppies spread—
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed,
Or like the snowfall on the river—
A moment white then melts forever."

Whether it be the child at its mother's knee or the man of mature years, whether it be the banker or the beggar, the prince in his palace or the peasant in his hut, there is in every heart the dream of a happier lot in life.

I heard the sound of revelry at the gilded club, where a hundred hearts beat happily. There were flushed cheeks and thick tongues and jests and anecdotes around the banquet spread. There were songs and poems and speeches. I saw an orator rise to respond to a toast to "Home, sweet home," and thus he responded:

"Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen: John Howard Payne touched millions of hearts when he sang:

**'Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home.**

But as for me, gentlemen, give me the pleasures an' the palaces—give me liberty, or give me death. No less beautifully expressed are the tender sentiments expressed in the tender verse of Lord Byron:

**"'Tis sweet to hear the watch dog's honest bark
Bay deep mouthed welcome as we draw near home;
'Tis sweet to know there is an eye will mark our coming,
And look brighter when we come."**

But as for me, gentlemen, I would rather hear the barkin' of a gatlin' gun than to hear the watch dog's honest bark this minute. I would rather look into the mouth of a cannon than to look into the eyes that are now waitin' to mark my comin' at this delightful hour of three o'clock in the morning."

Then he launched out on the ocean of thought like a magnificent ship going to sea. And when the night was far spent, and the orgies were over, and the lights were blown out at the club, I saw him enter his own sweet home in his lory—entered it, like a thief, with his boots in

his hands,—entered it singing softly to himself:

"I'm called little gutter pup, sweet little gutter pup,
Though I could never tell why—(hic),
Yet still I'm called gutter pup, sweet little gutter pup,
Poor little gutter pup—I—(hic)."

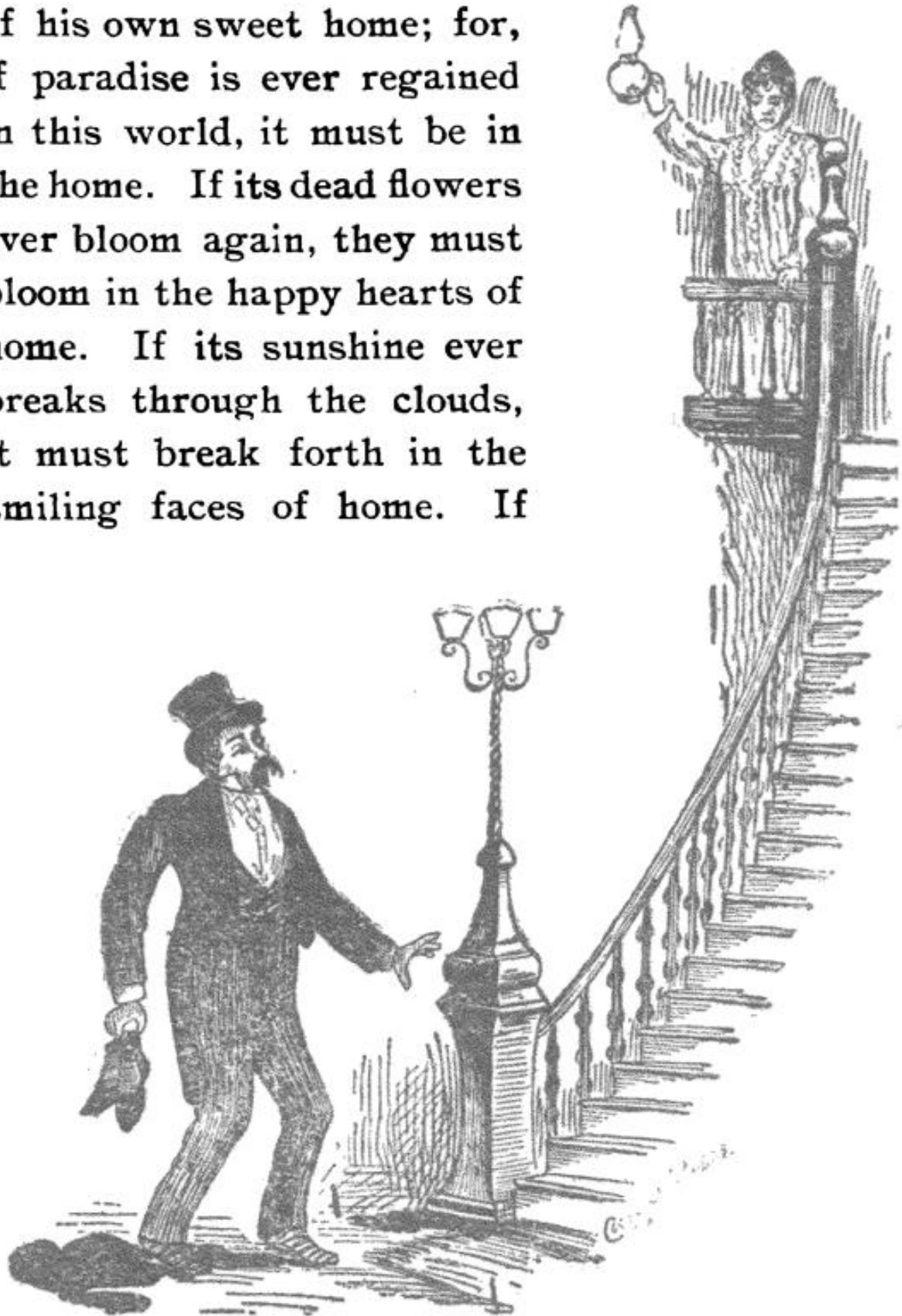
He was unconscious of the presence of the white figure that stood at the head of the stairs holding up a lamp, like liberty enlightening the world, and as a tremulous voice called him to the judgment bar, the door closed behind him on the paradise of a fool, and he sneaked up the steps, muttering to himself, "What shadows we are—(hic)—what shadows we pursue." Then I saw him again in the morning, reaping temptation's bitter reward in the agonies of his drunk-sick; and like Mark Twain's boat in a storm,

"He heaved and sot, and sot and heaved,
And high his rudder flung,
And every time he heaved and sot,
A mighty leak he sprung."

If I were a woman with a husband like "that," I would fill him so full of Keely's chloride of gold that he would jingle as he walks and tinkle as he talks and have a fit at every mention of the silver bill.

The biggest fool that walks on God's footstool is the man who destroys the joy and peace

of his own sweet home; for, if paradise is ever regained in this world, it must be in the home. If its dead flowers ever bloom again, they must bloom in the happy hearts of home. If its sunshine ever breaks through the clouds, it must break forth in the smiling faces of home. If



RETURNING FROM THE CLUB.

heaven ever descends to earth and angels tread its soil, it must be in the sacred precincts of home. That which heaven most approves is the pure and virtuous home. For around it linger all the sweetest memories and dearest associations of mankind; upon it hang the hopes and happiness of the nations of the earth, and above it shines the ever blessed star that lights the way back to the paradise that was lost.

BACHELOR AND WIDOWER.

I saw a poor old bachelor live all the days of his life in sight of paradise, too cowardly to put his arm around it and press it to his bosom. He shaved and primped and resolved to marry every day in the year for forty years. But when the hour for love's duel arrived, when he stood trembling in the presence of rosy cheeks and glancing eyes, and beauty shook her curls and gave the challenge, his courage always oozed out, and he fled ingloriously from the field of honor.

Far happier than the bachelor is old Uncle Rastus in his cabin, when he holds Aunt Dina's hand in his and asks: "Who's sweet?" And Dina drops her head over on his shoulder and answers, "Boaf uv us."

A thousand times happier is the frisky old widower with his pink bald head, his wrinkles and his rheumatism, who

Wires in and wires out,
And leaves the ladies all in doubt,

As to what is his age and what he is worth,
And whether or not he owns the earth.

He "toils not, neither does he spin," yet Solomon, in all his glory was not more popular with the ladies. He is as light-hearted as "Mary's little lamb." He is acquainted with every hog path in the matrimonial paradise and knows all the nearest cuts to the "sanctum sanctorum" of woman's heart. But his jealousy is as cruel as the grave. Woe unto the bachelor who dares to cross his path.

An old bachelor in my native mountains once rose in church to give his experience, in the presence of his old rival who was a widower, and with whom he was at daggers' points in the race to win the affections of one of the sisters in Zion. Thus the pious old bachelor spake: "Brethren, this is a beautiful world. I love to live in it just as well to-day as I ever did in my life. And the saddest thought that ever crossed this old brain of mine is, that in a few short days at best, these old eyes will be glazed in death and I'll never get to see my loved ones in this world any more." And his old rival shouted from the "amen corner," *thank God!*"

PHANTOMS.

In every brain there is a bright phantom realm, where fancied pleasures beckon from distant shores; but when we launch our barks to reach them, they vanish, and beckon again from still more distant shores. And so, poor fallen man pursues the ghosts of paradise as the deluded dog chases the shadows of flying birds in the meadow.

The painter only paints the shadows of beauty on his canvas; the sculptor only chisels its lines and curves from the marble; the sweetest melody is but the faint echo of the wooing voice of music.

We stumble over the golden nuggets of contentment in pursuit of the phantoms of wealth, and what is wealth? It can not purchase a moment of happiness. Marble halls may open wide their doors and offer her shelter, but happiness will flee from a palace to dwell in a cottage. We crush under our feet the roses of peace and

love in our eagerness to reach the illuminated heights of glory; and what is earthly glory?

"He who ascends to mountain tops shall find
The loftiest peaks most wrapped in clouds and snow;
He who surpasses or subdues mankind,
Must look down on the hate of those below.
Though high above the sun of glory glow,
And far beneath the earth and ocean spread,
'Round him are icy rocks, and loudly blow
Contending tempests on his naked head."

I saw a comedian convulse thousands with his delineations of the weaknesses of humanity in the inimitable "Rip Van Winkle." I saw him make laughter hold its sides, as he impersonated the coward in "The Rivals;" and I said: I would rather have the power of Joseph Jefferson, to make the world laugh, and to drive care and trouble from weary brains and sorrow from heavy hearts, than to wear the blood-stained laurels of military glory, or to be President of the United States, burdened with bonds and gold, and overwhelmed with the double standard, and three girl babies.

THE FALSE IDEAL.

It is the false ideal that builds the “Paradise of Fools.” It is the eagerness to achieve success in realms we cannot reach, which breeds more than half the ills that curse the world. If all the fish eggs were to hatch, and every little fish become a big fish, the oceans would be pushed from their beds, and the rivers would be eternally “dammed”—with fish; but the whales, and sharks, and sturgeons, and dog-fish, and eels, and snakes, and turtles, make three meals every day in the year on fish and fish eggs. If all the legal spawn should hatch out lawyers, the earth and the fullness thereof would be mortgaged for fees, and mankind would starve to death in the effort to pay off the “aforesaid and the same.” If the entire crop of medical eggs should hatch out full fledged doctors, old “Skull and Cross Bones” would hold high carnival among the children of men, and the old sexton would sing:

“I gather them in,
I gather them in.”

If I could get the ear of the young men who pant after politics, as the hart panteth after the water brook, I would exhort them to seek honors in some other way, for "Jordan is a hard road to travel."

The poet truly said: "How like a mounting devil in the heart is the unreined ambition. Let it once but play the monarch, and its haughty brow glows with a beauty that bewilders thought and unthrones peace forever. Putting on the very pomp of Lucifer, it turns the heart to ashes, and with not a spring left in the bosom for the spirit's lip, we look upon our splendor and forget the thirst of which we perish."

THE CIRCUS IN THE MOUNTAINS.

I saw a circus in a mountain town. The mountaineers swarmed from far and near, and lined the streets on every hand with open mouth and bated breath, as the grand procession, with band, and clown, and camels, and elephants, and lions, and tigers, and spotted horses, paraded in brilliant array. The excitement was boundless when the crowd rushed into the tent, and they left behind them a surging mass of humanity, unprovided with tickets, and destitute of the silver half of the double standard. Their interest rose to white heat as the audience within shouted and screamed with laughter at the clown, and cheered the girl in tights, and applauded the acrobats as they turned somersaults over the elephant. But temptation whispered in the ear of a gentleman in tow breeches, and he stealthily opened his long bladed knife and cut a hole in the canvas. A score of others followed suit, and held their sides and laughed at the scenes within. But as they laughed a show-



THE CIRCUS IN THE MOUNTAINS.

man slipped inside, armed with a policeman's “billy.” He quietly sidled up to the hole where a peeper's nose made a knot on the tent on the inside. “Whack!” went the “billy”—there was a loud grunt, and old “Tow Breeches” spun 'round like a top, and cut the “pigeon wing,” while his nose spouted blood. “Whack!” went the “billy” again, and old “Hickory Shirt” turned a somersault backwards and rose “a-runnin’.” The last “whack” fell like a thunderbolt on the Roman nose of a half drunk old settler from away up at the head of the creek. He fell flat on his back, quivered for a moment, and then sat up and clapped his hand to his bleeding nose and in his bewilderment exclaimed: “Well I'll be durned! hel-lo there stranger!” he shouted to a bystander, “whar wuz you *at* when the lightnin' struck the show?” Then I saw a row of bleeding noses at the branch nearby, taking a bath; and each nose resembled a sore hump on a camel's back.

So it is around the great arena of political fame and power. “Whack!” goes the “billy” of popular opinion; and politicians, like old “Tow Breeches,” spin 'round with the broken noses of misguided ambition and disappointed



"WHACK!" WENT THE "BILLY!"

hope. In the heated campaign many a would-be Webster lies down and dreams of the triumph that awaits him on the morrow, but he wakes to find it only a dream, and when the votes are counted his little bird hath flown, and he is in the condition of the old Jew. An Englishman, an Irishman and a Jew hung up their socks together on Christmas Eve. The Englishman put his diamond pin in the Irishman's sock; the Irishman put his watch in the sock of the Englishman; they slipped an egg into the sock of the Jew. “And did you git onny thing?” asked Pat in the morning. “Oh yes,” said the Englishman, “I received a fine gold watch, don't you know. And what did you get Pat?” “Begorra, I got a foine diamond pin.” “And what did you get, Jacob?” said the Englishman to the Jew. “Vell,” said Jacob, holding up the egg, “I got a shicken but it got away before I got up.”

THE PHANTOM OF FORTUNE.

I would not clip the wings of noble, honorable aspiration. I would not bar and bolt the gate to the higher planes of thought and action, where truth and virtue bloom and ripen into glorious fruit. There are a thousand fields of endeavor in the world, and happy is he who labors where God intended him to labor.

The contented plowman who whistles as he rides to the field and sings as he plows, and builds his little paradise on the farm, gets more out of life than the richest Shylock on earth.

The good old spectacled mother in Israel, with her white locks and beaming face, as she works in her sphere, visiting the poor, nursing the sick, and closing the eyes of the dead, is more beautiful in her life, and more charming in her character, than the loveliest queen of society who ever chased the phantoms of pleasure in the ballroom.

The humblest village preacher who faithfully serves his God, and leads his pious flock in the

paths of holiness and peace, is more eloquent, and plays a nobler part than the most brilliant infidel who ever blasphemed the name of God.

The industrious drummer who travels all night and toils all day to win comfort for wife, and children, and mother, and sister, is a better man, and a far better citizen, than the most successful speculator on Wall Street, who plays with the fortunes of his fellow-man as the wolf plays with the lamb, or as the cyclone plays with the feather.

Young ladies, when the time comes to marry, say “yes” to the good-natured, big-hearted drummer. For he is a spring in a desert, a straight flush in a weary hand, a “thing of beauty and a joy forever,” and he will never be at home to bother you.

CLOCKS.

Oliver Wendell Holmes says: "Our brains are seventy year clocks. The angel of life winds them up once for all, closes the case, and gives the key into the hand of the resurrection angel." And when I read it I thought, what a stupendous task awaits the angel of the resurrection, when all the countless millions of old rickety, rusty, worm-eaten clocks are to be resurrected, and wiped, and dusted, and repaired, for mansions in the skies! There will be every kind and character of clock and clockwork resurrected on that day. There will be the Catholic clock with his beads, and the Episcopalian clock with his ritual. There will be an old clock resurrected on that day wearing a broad-cloth coat buttoned up to the throat; and when he is wound up he will go off with a whizz and a bang. He will get up out of the dust shouting, "hallelujah!" and he will proclaim "*sanctification!*" and "*falling from grace!*" and "*baptism by sprinkling and pouring!*" as the only

true doctrine by which men shall go sweeping through the pearly gate, into the new Jerusalem. And he will be recognized as a Methodist preacher, a little noisy, a little clogged with chicken feathers, but ripe for the Kingdom of Heaven.

There will be another old clock resurrected on that day, dressed like the former, but a little stiffer and straighter in the back, and armed with a pair of gold spectacles and a manuscript. When he is wound up he will break out in a cold sepulchral tone with, firstly: “*foreordination!*” secondly: “*predestination!*” and thirdly: “*the final perseverance of the saints!*” And he will be recognized as a Presbyterian preacher, a little blue and frigid, a little dry and formal, but one of God’s own elect, and he will be labeled for Paradise.

There will be an old Hard-shell clock resurrected, with throat whiskers, and wearing a shad-bellied coat and flap breeches. And when he is wound up a little, and a little oil is squirted into his old wheels, he will swing out into space on the wings of the gospel with: “My Dear Beloved Brethren-ah: I was a-ridin’ along this mornin’ a-tryin’ to study up somethin’ to preach

to this dying congregation-ah; and as I rid up by the old mill pond-ah lo and behold! there was an old snag a sticking up out of the middle of the pond-ah, and an old mud turtle had clim up out uv the water and was a settin' up on the old snag a sunnin' uv himself-ah; and lo! and behold-ah! when I rid up a leetle nearer to him-ah, he jumped off of the snag, 'ker chugg' into the water, thereby proving emersion-ah!"

Our brains *are* clocks, and our hearts are the pendulums. If we live right in this world, when the Resurrection Day shall come, the Lord God will polish the wheels, and jewel the bearings, and crown the casements with stars and with gold. And the pendulums shall be harps encrusted with precious stones. They shall swing to and fro on angel wings, making music in the ear of God, and flashing His glory through all the blissful cycles of eternity!

THE PANIC.

Happy is the man who lives within his means, and who is contented with the legitimate rewards of endeavor. The dreadful panic that checks the progress of civilization and paralyzes the commerce of the world, is the death angel that follows speculation. Everything is staked and hazarded on contingences that are as baseless as the fabric of a dream. The day of settlement comes and nobody is able to settle. The borrower is powerless to meet his note in the bank; the banker is powerless to pay his depositors, and confidence is stampeded like a herd of cattle. The timid and suspicious old farmer catches the wild note of alarm, and deserting his plow and sleepy steers in the field, he mounts his mule, and urging him on with pounding heels, rushes pell-mell to the bank, and with bulging eyes, demands his money. The excitement spreads like fire. The blacksmith leaves his anvil, the carpenter his bench, and the tailor his goose. The tanner deserts his hide, and the

shoemaker throws down his last to save his all. The mason with his trowel in his hand, rushes from the half-finished wall; Pat drops his hod between heaven and earth and slides down the ladder, muttering: "Oi'll have me moaney or *Oi'll* have blood!" The fat phlegmatic Dutchman, dozing behind his bar, wakes to the situation and waddles down the street, puffing and blowing like an engine, and muttering: "Mine Got in Himmel—mine debosit ish boosted!" And thus they make the run on the bank, gathering about it like the hosts of Armageddon. The bottom drops out, and millionaires go under like the passengers of a wrecked steamer.

“BUNK CITY.”

Did you ever pass the remains of a “boom” town in your travels? Did you never gaze upon the remains of “Bunk City,” where but yesterday all was life and bustle, and to-day it looks like the ruins of Babylon? The empty fields for miles and miles around are laid off and dug up in streets, and look like they had been struck with ten thousand streaks of chain lightning. Standing here and there are huge frames holding up mammoth sign boards, bearing the names of land companies, but the land companies are gone. Half driven nails are left to rust in a few old skeleton buildings, the brick lies unmortared in half finished walls, and tenantless houses stand here and there like the ghosts of buried hope. Down by the river stands the furnace, grim and silent as the extinct crater of Popocatepetl; and the great hotel on the hill looks like the tower of Babel two thousand years after the confusion of tongues. The last of the speculators, with his blue nose and his old bat-

tered plug hat which resembles an accordion that has been yanked by a cyclone, stands on the corner and contemplates his old sedge fields which have shrunk in value from one hundred dollars a front foot, to one *dollar for a hundred front acres*, and balefully sings a new song:

"After the boom is over, after the panic's on,
After the fools are leavin', after the money's gone,
Many a bank is "busted," if we could see in the room,
Many a pocket is empty, after the boom."

"YOUR UNCLE."

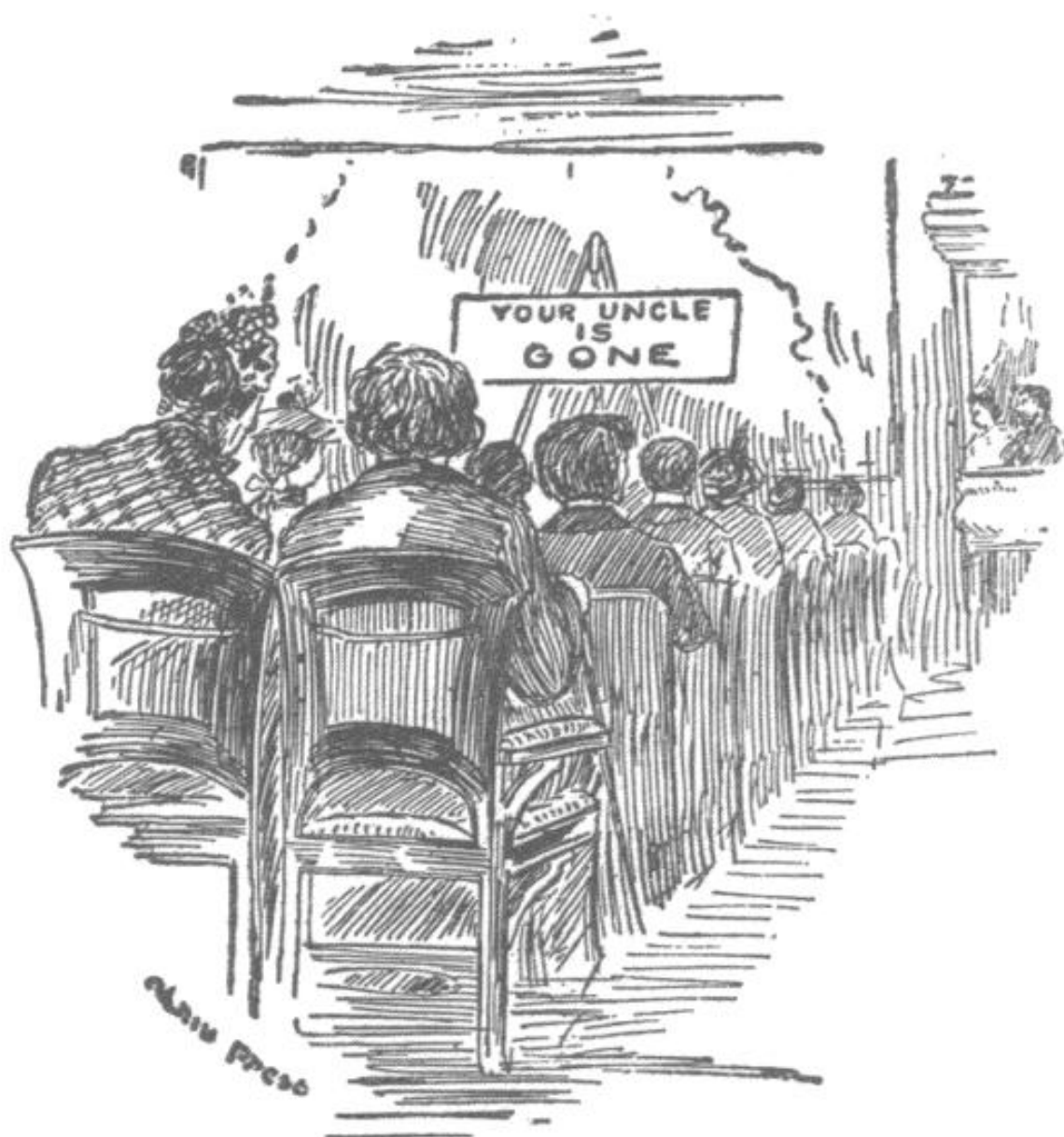
An impecunious speculator once flooded a town with handbills and posters containing this an-



COMING.

nouncement: "Your Uncle is coming." The streams of passers-by looked at the bill boards and wondered what it meant. The speculator rented the theatre, and one day a new flood of handbills and posters made this announcement: "Your Uncle is here." He gave orders to his stage manager to raise the curtain exactly at eight o'clock. The speculator himself stood in the door and received the admission fees and then disappeared. In their curiosity to see the performance of "Your Uncle," the villagers filled every seat in the theatre long before the hour for the performance arrived. The curtain rose at the appointed hour, and lo! on a board, in the center of the stage, was a card bearing this announcement in large letters: "*Your Uncle is gone.*"

What a splendid illustration of modern speculation and its willing victims who are so easily led into the "Paradise of Fools!"



GONE.

FOOLS.

But why mourn and brood over broken fortunes and the calamities of life? Why tarry in the doldrums of pessimism, with never a breeze to catch your limp and drooping sails and waft you on a joyous wave? Pessimism is the nightmare of the world. It is the prophet of famine, pestilence, and human woe. It is the apostle of the Devil, and its mission is to impede the progress of civilization. It denounces every institution established for human development as a fraud. It stigmatizes law as the machinery of injustice; it sneers at society as hollow-hearted corruption and insincerity; it brands politics as a reeking mass of rottenness, and scoffs at morality as the tinsel of sin. Its disciples are those who rail and snarl at everything that is noble and good, to whom a joke is an assault and battery, a laugh is an insult to outraged dignity, and the provocation of a smile is like passing an electric current through the facial muscles of a corpse.

God deliver us from the fools who seek to build their paradise on the ashes of those they have destroyed. God deliver us from the fools whose life work is to cast aspersions upon the motives and characters of the leaders of men. I believe the men who reach high places in politics are, as a rule, the best and brainiest men in the land, and upon their shoulders rest the safety and well-being of the peace-loving, God-fearing millions.

I believe the world is better to-day than it ever was before. I believe the refinements of modern society, its elegant accomplishments, its intellectual culture, and its conceptions of the beautiful, are glorious evidences of our advancement toward a higher plane of being.

I think the superb churches of to-day, with the glorious harmonies of their choral music, their great pipe organs, their violins and cornets, and their grand sermons, full of heaven's balm for aching hearts, are expressions of the highest civilization that has ever dawned upon the earth. I believe each successive civilization is better, and higher, and grander, than that which preceded it; and upon the shining rungs of this ladder of evolution, our race will finally

climb back to the Paradise that was lost. I believe that the society of to-day is better than it ever was before. I believe that human government is better, and nobler, and purer, than it ever was before. I believe the Church is stronger and is making grander strides toward the conversion of the world and the final establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth, than it ever made before.

I believe that the biggest fools in this world are the advocates and disseminators of infidelity, the would-be destroyers of the Paradise of God.

A BLOTTED PICTURE.

I sat in a great theatre at the National Capital. It was thronged with youth, and beauty, old age, and wisdom. I saw a man, the image of his God, stand upon the stage, and I heard him speak. His gestures were the perfection of grace; his voice was music, and his language was more beautiful than I had ever heard from mortal lips. He painted picture after picture of the pleasures, and joys, and sympathies, of home. He enthroned love and preached the gospel of humanity like an angel. Then I saw him dip his brush in ink, and blot out the beautiful picture he had painted. I saw him stab love dead at his feet. I saw him blot out the stars and the sun, and leave humanity and the universe in eternal darkness, and eternal death. I saw him like the Serpent of old, worm himself into the paradise of human hearts, and by his seductive eloquence and the subtle devices of his sophistry, inject his fatal venom, under whose blight its flowers faded, its music



INFIDELITY.

was hushed, its sunshine was darkened, and the soul was left a desert waste, with only the new made graves of faith and hope. I saw him, like a lawless, erratic meteor without an orbit, sweep across the intellectual sky, brilliant only in his self-consuming fire, generated by friction with the indestructible and eternal truths of God.

That man was the archangel of modern infidelity; and I said: How true is holy writ which declares, "the fool hath said in his heart, there is no God."

Tell me not, O Infidel, there is no God, no Heaven, no Hell!

"A solemn murmur in the soul tells of a world to be,
As travelers hear the billows roll before they reach the
sea."

Tell me not, O Infidel, there is no risen Christ!

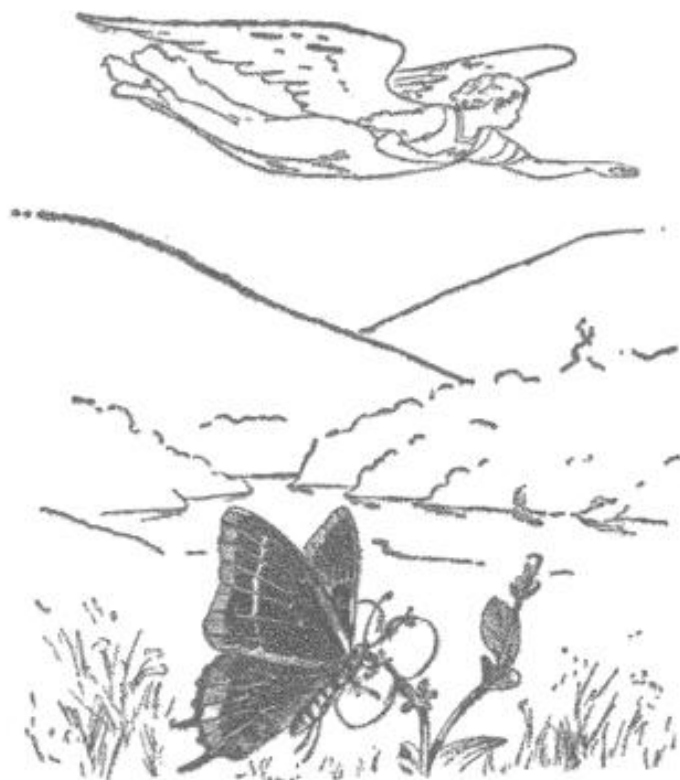
When every earthly hope hath fled,
When angry seas their billows fling,
How sweet to lean on what He said,
How firmly to His cross we cling!

What intelligence less than God could fashion the human body? What motive power is it, if it is not God, that drives that throbbing engine, the human heart, with ceaseless, tireless

stroke, sending the crimson streams of life bounding and circling through every vein and artery? Whence, and what, if not of God, is this mystery we call the mind? What is this mystery we call the soul? What is it that thinks and feels and knows and acts? Oh, who can comprehend, who can deny, the Divinity that stirs within us!

God is everywhere, and in everything. His mystery is in every bud, and blossom, and leaf, and tree; in every rock, and hill, and vale, and mountain; in every spring, and rivulet, and river. The rustle of His wing is in every zephyr; its might is in every tempest. He dwells in the dark pavilions of every storm cloud. The lightning is His messenger, and the thunder is His voice. His awful tread is in every earthquake and on every angry ocean; and the heavens above us teem with His myriads of shining witnesses. The universe of solar systems whose wheeling orbs course the crystal paths of space proclaim through the dread halls of eternity, the glory, and power, and dominion, of the all-wise, omnipotent, and eternal God.

“VISIONS AND DREAMS.”



The infinite wisdom of Almighty God has made a plane of intelligence, and a horizon of happiness, for every being in the universe, from the butterfly to the archangel. And every plane has

its own horizon, narrowest and darkest on the lowest level, but broad as the universe on the highest. Man stands on that wondrous plane where mortality and immortality meet. Below him is animal life, lighted only by the dim lamp of instinct; above him is spiritual life, illuminated by the light of reason and the glory of God. Below him is this old material world of rock, and hill, and vale, and mountain; above

him is the mysterious world of the imagination whose rivers are dreams, whose continents are visions of beauty, and upon whose shadowy shores the surfs of phantom seas forever break.

We hear the song of the cricket on the hearth, and the joyous hum of the bees among the poppies; we hear the light-winged lark gladden the morning with her song, and the silver-throated thrush warble in the tree-top. What are these, and all the sweet melodies we hear, but echoes from the realm of visions and dreams?

The humming-bird, that swift fairy of the rainbow, fluttering down from the land of the sun when June scatters her roses northward, and poising on wings that never weary, kisses the nectar from the waiting flowers; how bright and beautiful is the horizon of his little life! How sweet is the dream of the covert in the deep mountain gorge, to the trembling, panting deer in his flight before the hunter's horn and the yelping hounds! How dear to the heart of the weary ox is the vision of green fields and splashing waters! And down on the farm, when the cows come home at sunset, fragrant with the breath of clover blossoms, how rich is the feast of happiness when the frolicsome calf bounds

forward to the flowing udder, and with his walling eyes reflecting whole acres of "calf heaven" and his little tail wiggling in speechless bliss, he draws his evening meal from nature's commissariat. The snail lolls in his shell and thinks himself a king in the grandest palace in the world. And how brilliant is the horizon of the firefly when he winks his "other eye!"

The red worm delves in the sod and dines on clay; he makes no after-dinner speeches; he never responds to a toast; but silently revels on in his dark banquet halls under the dank violets or in the rich mould by the river. But the red worm never reaches the goal of his visions and dreams until he is triumphantly impaled on the fishhook of the barefooted boy,

Who sees other visions and dreams other dreams,
Of fluttering suckers in shining streams.

And Oh, there is no thrill half so rapturous to the barefooted boy as the thrill of a nibble! Two darkies sat on a rock on the bank of a river, fishing. One was an old darkey; the other was a boy. The boy got a nibble, his foot slipped, and he fell headlong into the surging waters and began to float out to the middle of the stream, sinking, and rising, and struggling,

and crying for help. The old man hesitated on the rock for a moment; then he plunged in after the drowning boy, and after a desperate struggle, landed his companion safely on shore. A passer-by ran up to the old darkey and patted him on the shoulder and said: "Old man, that was a noble deed in you, to risk your life that way to save that good-for-nothing boy." "Yes boss," mumbled the old man, "I was obleeged ter save dat nigger, he had all de bate in his pocket!"

THE HAPPY LONG AGO.

Not long ago I wandered back to the scenes of my boyhood, on my father's old plantation on the bank of the river, in the beautiful land of my native mountains. I rambled again in the pathless woods with my rifle on my shoulder. I sat on the old familiar logs amid the falling leaves of autumn and heard the squirrels bark and shake the branches as they jumped from tree to tree. I heard the katydid sing, and the whip-poor-will, and the deep basso-profundo of the bullfrog on the bank of the pond. I heard the drumming of a pheasant and the hoot of a wise old owl away over in "Sleepy Hollow." I heard the tinkling of bells on the distant hills, sweetly mingling with the happy chorus of the song birds in their evening serenade. Every living creature seemed to be chanting a hymn of praise to its God; and as I sat there and listened to the weird, wild harmonies, a vision of the past opened before me. I thought I was a boy again, and played around the cabins of the



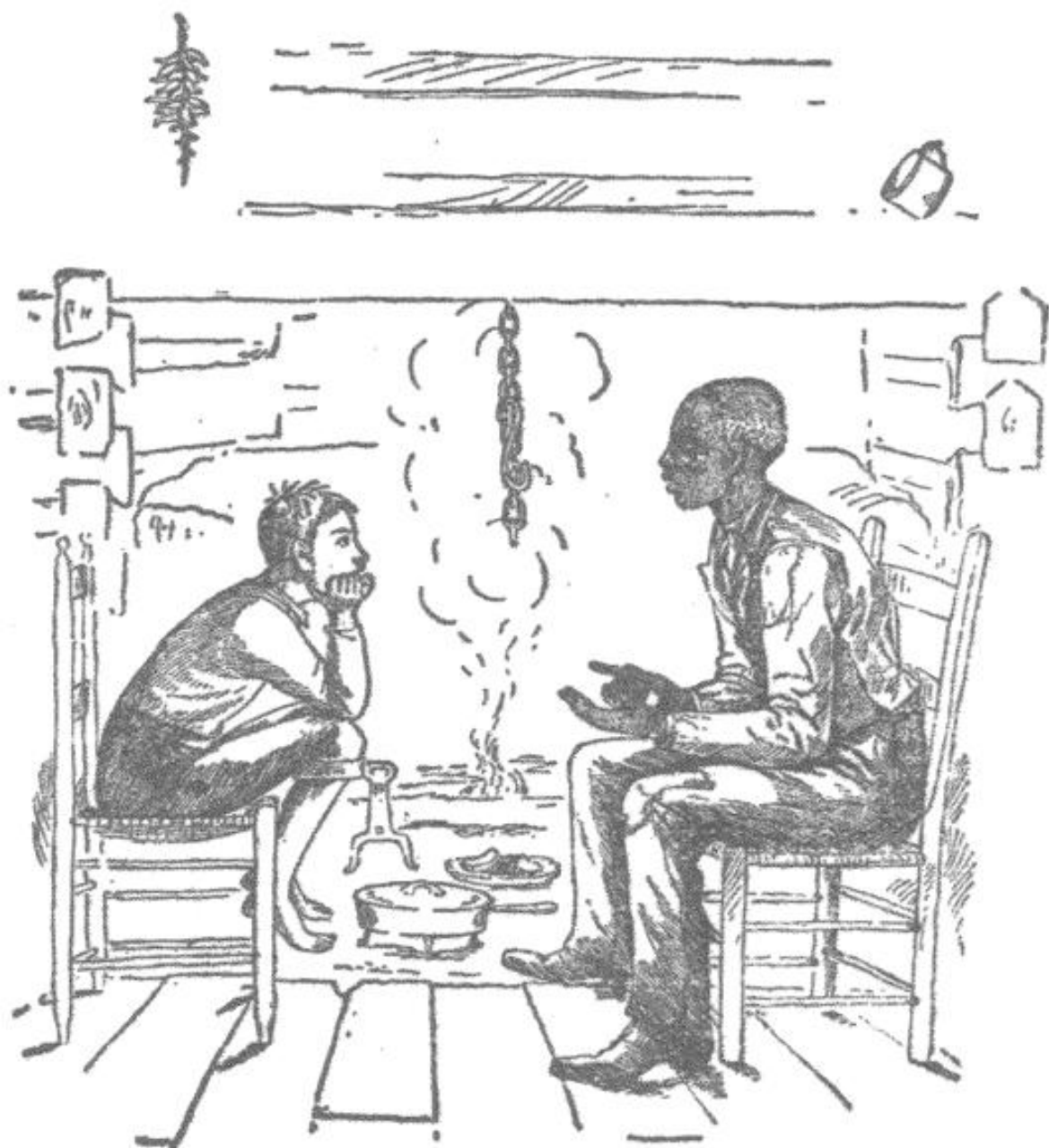
THE MUSIC OF THE OLD PLANTATION.

old time darkies, and heard them laugh and sing and tell their stories as they used to long ago. My hair stood on ends again (I was afflicted with hair when I was a boy), and the chills played up and down my back when I remembered old Uncle Rufus' story of the panthers. He said: "Many years ago, Mas. Jeems was a-gwine along de path by de graveyard late in de evenin', an' bless de Lo'd, all of a sudden he looked up, an' dar was a painter crouchin' down befo' 'im, a-pattin' de ground wid his tail, an' ready to spring. Mas. Jeems wheeled to run, an' bless de Lo'd, dar was annudder painter, crouchin' an' pattin' de groun' wid his tail, in de path behind him, an' ready to spring. An' boaf ov dem painters sprung at de same time, right toards Mas. Jeemses head; Mas. Jeems jumped to one side. An' dem painters come togedder in de air. An' da was a-gwine so fast, an' da struck each udder wid sitch turble ambition dat instid ov comin' down, da went up. An' bless de Lo'd, Mas. Jeems stood dar an' watched dem painters go on up, an' up, an' up, till da went clean out o' sight a-fightin'. An' bless de Lo'd, de hair was a-fallin' for three days. Which fulfills de words ob de scripchah whar it reads.

‘De young men shall dream dreams, an’ de ol’ men shall see visions.’ ”

I remembered the tale Uncle Solomon used to tell about the first convention that was ever held in the world. He said: “It wuz a convenchun ov de animils. Brudder Fox wuz dar, an’ Brudder Wolf, an’ Brudder Rabbit, an’ all de rest ov de animil kingdom wuz geddered togedder fur to settle some questions concarnin’ de happiness ov de animil kingdom. De first question dat riz befo’ de convenchun wuz, how da should vote. Brudder Coon, he took de floah an’ moved dat de convenchun vote by raisin’ der tails; whereupon Brudder Possum riz wid a grin ov disgust, an’ said: ‘Mr. Chaiahman, I’s unanimous opposed to dat motion: Brudder Coon wants dis convenchun to vote by raisin’ der tails, kase Brudder Coon’s got a ring striped an’ streaked tail, an’ wants to show it befo’ de convenchun. Brudder Coon knows dat de ’possum is afflicted wid an ole black rusty tail, an I consider dat moshun an insult to de ’possum race; an’ besides dat, Mr. Chaiahman, if you passes dis moshun for to vote by raisin’ yo’ tails, de Billy-Goat’s already voted!’ ”

I sometimes think that Uncle Solomon’s home-



THE HAPPY LONG AGO.

ly story of the goat would be a splendid illustration of some of our modern politicians. It is difficult to tell which side of the question they are on.

I remembered the yarn Uncle Yaddie once spun at the expense of Uncle Rastus. Rastus looked sour and said: "You bettah not go too fur; I'll tell about dem watermillions what disappeared frum Mas. Landon's watermillion patch." But Uncle Yaddie was undismayed by the threatened attack upon his own record, and said: "Some time ago Rastus concluded to go into de egg business, an' he prayed to de Lo'd to send him some hens, but somehow or nudder de hens never come; an' den he prayed to de Lo'd to send him after de hens, an' lo! an' behold! nex' mornin' his lot wus full ov chickens. Rastus fixed de nestiz, an' waited, an' waited fur de hens to lay, but somehow or nudder de hens wouldn't lay dat summer at all; an' Rastus kep git'n madder an' madder, till one day de ole rooster hopped up on de porch an begun to flop his wings an' crow. Rastus looked at him sideways, an' muttered, 'Yes! floppin' yo' wings an' crowin' aroun' heah like an ole fool, an' you caint lay a egg to save yo' life!' "

The darkies fell over in the floor, and every body laughed except Rastus. But to appease his wrath, Uncle Yaddie rolled out a big "water-million" from under the bed, which lighted up the face of the frowning old Rastus with smiles, and as the luscious red pulp melted away in his mouth, he cut the "pigeon wing" in the middle of the floor, and sang like a mocking bird:

"Oh, de honeymoon am sweet,
De chicken am good,
De 'possum, it am very very fine,
But give me, O, give me,
Oh, how I wish you would!
Dat watermillion hanging' on de vine!"

Then old Uncle Newt rosined his bow, and the welkin rang with the music of the fiddle.

There I sat in the old familiar woods and dreamed of the happy long ago, until a gang of blackbirds, spluttering in a neighboring tree-top woke me. And when I rose from the log and threw myself into the shape of an interrogation point, and touched the trigger, at the crack of my rifle old bullfrogg shot into the pond; the hoot-owl "scooted" into his castle in the trunk of an old hollow tree; the blackbirds cut the "asymptote of a hyperbolical curve" in the air; the squirrel fell to the ground at my feet,

with a bullet through his brain, and there was silence—silence in the frog pond; silence in the trees; silence in "Sleepy Hollow;" silence all around me.

I shouldered my rifle and wended my way back to the old homestead on the bank of the river and silence was there. The voices of the happy long ago were hushed. The old time darkies were sleeping on the hill, close by the spot where my father sleeps. The moss-covered bucket was gone from the well. The old barn sheds had "creeled." The old house where I was born was silent and deserted.

As I looked upon these scenes of my earliest recollection, I was softened and subdued into a sweet pensive sorrow, which only the happiest and holiest associations of by-gone years can call into being. There are times in our lives when grief lies heaviest on the soul; when memory weeps; when gathering clouds of mournful melancholy pour out their floods and drown the heart in tears.

Oh, beautiful isle of memory, lighted by the morning star of life! where the roses bloom by the door, where the robins sing among the apple blossoms, where bright waters ripple in

eternal melody! There are echoes of songs that are sung no more; tender words spoken by lips that are dust; blessings from hearts that are still. There's a useless cradle, and a broken doll; a sunny tress, and an empty garment folded away; there's a lock of silvered hair, and an unforgotten prayer, and *mother* is sleeping there!

DREAMS OF THE YEARS TO COME.

There, under the shade of the sycamores, on my father's old farm, I used to dream of the years to come. I looked through a vista blooming with pleasures, fruiting with achievements, and beautiful as the cloud-isles of the sunset. The siren, ambition, sat beside me and fired my young heart with her prophetic song. She dazzled me, and charmed me, and soothed me, into sweet fantastic reveries. She touched me and bade me look into the wondrous future. The bow of promise spanned it. Hope was enthroned there and smiled like an angel of light. Under that shining arch lay the goal of my fondest aspirations. Visions of wealth, and of laurels, and of applauding thousands, crowded the horizon of my dream. I saw the capitol of the Republic, that white-columned pantheon of liberty, lifting its magnificent pile from the midst of the palaces, and parks, the statues, and monuments, of the most beautiful city in the world. Infatuated with this vision of earthly glory, I bade



AMBITION'S DREAM.

adieu to home and its dreams, seized the standard of a great political party, and rushed into the turmoil and tumult of the heated campaign. Unable to bear the armor of a Saul, I went forth to do battle armed with a fiddle, a pair of saddlebags, a plug horse, and the eternal truth. There was the din of conflict by day on the hustings; there was the sound of revelry by night in the cabins. The mid-night stars twinkled to the music of the merry fiddle, and the hills resounded with the clatter of dwindling shoe soles, as the mountain lads and lassies danced the hours away in the good old time Virginia reel. I rode among the mountain fastnesses like the "Knight of the woeful figure," mounted on my prancing "Rozenante," everywhere charging the windmill of the opposing party. and wherever I drew rein the mountaineers swarmed from far and near to witness the bloodless battle of the contending candidates in the arena of joint discussion. My learned competitor, bearing the shield of "protection to American labor," and armed to the teeth with mighty argument, hurled himself upon me with the fury of a lion. His blows descended like thunderbolts, and the welkin rang with cheers when

his lance went shivering to the center. His logic was appalling, his imagery was sublime. His tropes and similes flashed like the drawn blades of charging cavalry, and with a flourish of trumpets, his grand effort culminated in a splendid tribute to the Republic, crowned with Goldsmith's beautiful metaphor:

“As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale and midway leaves the storm;
Though 'round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.”

I received the charge of the enemy “with poised lance, and visor down.” I deluged the tall cliff under a flood of “mountain eloquence” which poured from my patriotic lips like molasses pouring from the bung-hole of the universe. I mounted the American eagle and soared among the stars. I scraped the skies and cut the black illimitable far out beyond the orbit of Uranus, and I reached the climax of my triumphant flight with a hyperbole that eclipsed Goldsmith's metaphor, unthroned the foe, and left him stunned upon the field. Thus I soared:

“I stood upon the sea shore, and with a frail reed in my hand, I wrote in the sand, ‘My Country, I love thee;’ a mad wave came rushing by and wiped out the fair impression. Cruel wave,

treacherous sand, frail reed; I said, 'I hate ye I'll trust ye no more, but with a giant's arm, I'll reach to the coast of Norway, and pluck its tallest pine, and dip it in the crater of Vesuvius, and write upon the burnished heavens; My Country, *I love thee!* And I'd like to see *any* durned wave rub that out!!' "

Between the long intervals of argument my speech grinned with anecdotes like a basketfull of 'possum heads. The fiddle played its part, the people did the rest, and I carved upon the tombstone of the demolished Knight these tender words:

"Tread softly 'round this sacred heap,
It guards ambition's restless sleep;
Whose greed for place ne'er did forsake him,
Don't mention office, or you'll wake him!"

I reached the goal of my visions and dreams under that colossal dome whose splendors are shadowed in the broad river that flows by the shrine of Mt. Vernon. I sat amid the confusion and uproar of the parliamentary struggles of the lower branch of the Congress of the United States. "Sunset" Cox, with his beams of wit and humor, convulsed the house and shook the galleries. Alexander Stephens, one of the last tottering monuments of the glory of the

Old South, still lingering on the floor, where, in by-gone years the battles of his vigorous manhood were fought. I saw in the Senate an assemblage of the grandest men since the days of Webster and Clay. Conkling, the intellectual Titan, the Apollo of manly form and grace, thundered there. The “Plumed Knight,” that grand incarnation of mind and magnetism, was at the zenith of his glory. Edmunds, and Zack Chandler, and the brilliant and learned Jurist, Mat. Carpenter, were there. Thurman the “noblest Roman of them all” was there with his famous bandana handkerchief. The immortal Ben Hill, the idol of the South, and Lamar, the gifted orator and highest type of Southern chivalry were there. Garland, and Morgan, and Harris, and Coke, were there; and Beck with his sledge-hammer intellect. It was an arena of opposing gladiators more magnificent and majestic than was ever witnessed in the palmiest days of the Roman Empire. There were giants in the Senate in those days, and when they clashed shields and measured swords in debate, the capitol trembled and the nation thrilled in every nerve.

But how like the ocean’s ebb and flow are the

restless tides of politics! These scenes of grandeur and glory soon dissolved from my view like a dream. I "saved the country" for only two short years. My competitor proved a lively corpse. He burst forth from the tomb like a locust from its shell, and came buzzing to the national capital with "war on his wings." I went buzzing back to the mountains to dream again under the sycamores; and there a new ambition was kindled in my soul. A new vision opened before me. I saw another capitol rise on the bank of the Cumberland, overshadowing the tomb of Polk and close by the Hermitage where reposes the sacred dust of Andrew Jackson. And I thought if I could only reach the exalted position of Governor of the old "Volunteer State" I would then have gained the sum of life's honors and happiness. But lo! another son of my father and mother was dreaming there under the same old sycamore. We had dreamed together in the same trundle-bed and often kicked each other out. Together we had seen visions of pumpkin pie and pulled hair for the biggest slice. Together we had smoked the first cigar and together learned to play the fiddle. But now the dreams of our manhood clash-

ed. Relentless fate had decreed that “York” must contend with “Lancaster” in the “War of the Roses.” And with flushed cheeks and throbbing hearts we eagerly entered the field; his shield bearing the red rose, mine the white. It was a contest of principles, free from the wormwood and gall of personalities, and when the multitude of partisans gathered at the hustings, a white rose on every Democratic bosom, a red rose on every Republican breast, in the midst of a wilderness of flowers there was many a tilt and many a loud huzzah. But when the clouds of war had cleared away, I looked upon the drooping red rose on the bosom of the vanquished Knight, and thought of the first speech my mother ever taught me:

“Man’s a vapor full of woes,
Cuts a caper—down he goes!”

The white rose triumphed. But the shadow is fairer than the substance. The pathway of ambition is marked at every mile with the grave of some sweet pleasure slain by the hand of sacrifice. It bristles with thorns planted by the fingers of envy and hate, and as we climb the rugged heights, behind us lie our bloody footprints, before us tower still greater heights,

scarred by tempests and wrapped in eternal snow. Like the edelweiss of the Alps, ambition's pleasures bloom in the chill air of perpetual frost, and he who reaches the summit will look down with longing eyes, on the humbler plain of life below and wish his feet had never wandered from its warmer sunshine and sweeter flowers.

FROM THE CAVE-MAN TO THE “KISS-O-PHONE.

But let us not forget that it is better for us, and better for the world, that we dream, and that we tread the thorny paths, and climb the weary steeps, and leave our bloody tracks behind in the pursuit of our dreams. For in their extravagant conceptions lie the germs of human government, and invention, and discovery; and from their mysterious vagaries spring the motive power of the world's progress. Our civilization is the evolution of dreams. The rude tribes of primeval men dwelt in caves until some unwashed savage dreamed that damp caverns and unholy smells were not in accord with the principles of hygiene. It dawned upon his *mighty* intellect that one flat stone would lie on top of another, and that a little mud, aided by Sir Isaac Newton's law of gravitation, would hold them together, and that walls could be built in the form of a quadrangle. Here was

the birth of architecture. And thus, from the magical dreams of this unmausoleumed barbarian was evolved the home, the best and sweetest evolution of man's civilization.

John Howard Payne touched the tenderest chord that vibrates in the great heart of all humankind when he gave to immortality his song of "Home, Sweet Home;" and thank God, the grand mansions and palaces of the rich do not hold all the happiness and nobility of this world. There are millions of humble cottages where virtue resides in the warmth and purity of vestal fires, and where contentment dwells like perpetual summer.

The antediluvians plowed with a forked stick, with one prong for the beam and the other for the scratcher; and the plow boy and his sleepy ox had no choice of prongs to hitch to. It was all the same to Adam whether "Buck" was yoked to the beam or the scratcher. But some noble Cincinnatus dreamed of the burnished plowshare; genius wrought his dream into steel and now the polished Oliver Chill slices the earth like a hot knife plowing a field of Jersey butter, and the modern gang plow, bearing upon its wheels the gloved and umbrella'd leader

of the Populist Party, plows up the whole face of the earth in a single day.

What a wonderful workshop is the brain of man! Its noiseless machinery cuts, and carves, and moulds, in the imponderable material of ideas. It works its endless miracles through the brawny arm of labor, and the deft fingers of skill, and the world moves forward by its magic. Aladdin rubbed his lamp and the shadowy genii of fable performed impossible wonders. The dreamer of to-day rubs his fingers through his hair and the genii of his intellect work miracles which eclipse the most extravagant fantasies of the “Arabian Nights.”

A dreamer saw the imprisoned vapor throw open the lid of a teakettle, and lo! a steam engine came puffing from his brain. And now many a huge monster of Corliss, beautiful as a vision of Archimedes and smooth in movement as a wheeling planet, sends its thrill of life and power through mammoth plants of humming machinery. The fiery courser of the steel-bound track shoots over hill and plain, like a mid-night meteor through the fields of heaven, outstripping the wind.

A dreamer carried about in his brain a great

Leviathan. It was launched upon the billows, and like some colossal swan the palatial steamship now sweeps in majesty through the blue wastes of old ocean.

Six hundred years before Christ, some old Greek discovered electricity by rubbing a piece of amber, and unable to grasp the mystery, he called it soul. His discovery slept for more than two thousand years until it awoke in the dreams of Galvani, and Volta, and Benjamin Franklin. In the morning of the nineteenth century the sculptor and scientist, Morse, saw in his dreams, phantom lightnings leap across continents, and oceans, and felt the pulse of thunder beat as it came bounding over threads of iron that girdled the earth. In each throb he read a human thought. The electric telegraph emerged from his brain, like Minerva from the brow of Jove, and the world received a fresh baptism of light and glory.

In a few more years we will step over the threshold of the twentieth century. What greater wonders will the dreamers yet unfold? It may be that another magician, greater even than Edison, the "Wizzard of Menloe Park," will rise up and coax the very laws of nature

into easy compliance with his unheard-of dreams. I think he will construct an electric railway in the form of a huge tube, and call it the “electro-scoot,” and passengers will enter it in New York and touch a button and arrive in San Francisco two hours before they started! I think a new discovery will be made by which the young man of the future may stand at his “kiss-o-phone” in New York, and kiss his sweetheart in Chicago with all the delightful sensations of the “aforesaid and the same.” I think some Liebig will reduce foods to their last analyses, and by an ultimate concentration of their elements, will enable the man of the future to carry a year’s provisions in his vest pocket. The sucking dude will store his rations in the head of his cane, and the commissary department of a whole army will consist of a mule and a pair of saddlebags. A train load of cabbage will be transported in a sardine box, and a thousand fat Texas cattle in an oyster can. Power will be condensed from a forty horse engine to a quart cup. Wagons will roll by the power in their axles, and the cushions of our buggies will cover the force that propels them. The armies of the future will fight with

chain lightning, and the battlefield will become so hot and unhealthy that,

"He who fights and runs away
Will never fight another day."

Some dreaming Icarus will perfect the flying machine, and upon the aluminium wings of the swift Pegassus of the air the light-hearted society girl will sail among the stars, and

"Behind some dark cloud, where no one's allowed,
Make love to the man in the moon."

The rainbow will be converted into a Ferris wheel; all men will be bald headed; the women will run the Government—and *then I think the end of time will be near at hand.*

DREAMS.

I heard a song of love, and tenderness, and sadness, and beauty, sweeter than the song of a nightingale. It was breathed from the soul of Robert Burns. I heard a song of deepest passion surging like the tempest-tossed waves of the sea. It was the restless spirit of Lord Byron.

I heard a mournful melody of despairing love, full of that wild, mad, hopeless longing of a bereaved soul which the mid-night raven mocked at with that bitterest of all words—“Nevermore!” It was the weird threnody of the brilliant, but ill-starred Poe, who, like a meteor, blazed but for a moment, dazzling a hemisphere, and then went out forever in the darkness of death.

Then I was exalted, and lifted into the serene sunlight of peace, as I listened to the spirit of faith, pouring out in the songs of our own immortal Longfellow.

With Milton I walked the scented isles of long lost Paradise; and caught the odor of its bloom, and the swell of its music. He led me through its rose brakes, and under the vermilion and flame of its orchids and honeysuckles, down to the margin of the limpid river, where the water lilies slept in fadeless beauty, and the lotus nodded to the rippling waves; and there, under a bridal arch of orange blossoms, cordoned by palms and many-colored flowers, I saw a vision of bliss and beauty from which Satan turned away with an envy that stabbed him with pangs unfelt before in hell! It was earth's first vision of wedded love.

But the horizon of Shakespeare was broader than them all. There is no depth which he has not sounded, no height which he has not measured. He walked in the gardens of the intellectual gods and gathered sweets for the soul from a thousand unwithering flowers. He caught music from the spheres, and beauty from ten thousand fields of light. His brain was a mighty loom. His genius gathered and classified, his imagination spun and wove; the flying shuttle of his fancy delivered to the warp of wisdom and philosophy the shining threads

spun from the fibres of human hearts and human experience; and with his wondrous woof of pictured tapestries, he clothed all thought in the bridal robes of immortality. His mind was a resistless flood that deluged the world of literature with its glory. The succeeding poets are but survivors as by the ark, and, like the ancient dove, they gather and weave into garlands only the “flotsam” of beauty which floats on the bosom of the Shakespearean flood.

Oh, Shakespeare, archangel of poetry! The light from thy wings drowns the stars and flashes thy glory on the civilizations of the whole world!

“Unwearied, unfettered, unwatched, unconfined,
Be my spirit like thee, in the world of the mind;
No leaning for earth e’er to weary its flight;
But fresh as thy pinions in regions of light.”

All honor to the poets and philosophers and painters and sculptors and musicians of the world! They are its honeybees; its song-birds; its carrier doves, its ministering angels.

VISIONS OF DEPARTED GLORY.

I walked with Gibbon and Hume, through
the sombre halls of the past, and caught visions



of the glory of the classic Republics and Em-
pires that flourished long ago, and whose very

dust is still eloquent with the story of departed greatness. The spirit of genius lingers there still like the fragrance of roses faded and gone.

I thought I heard the harp of Pindar, and the impassioned song of the dark-eyed Sappho. I thought I heard the lofty epic of the blind Homer, rushing on in the red tide of battle, and the divine Plato discoursing like an oracle in his academic shades.

The canvas spoke and the marble breathed when Apelles painted and Phidias carved.

I stood with Michael Angelo and saw him chisel his dreams from the marble.

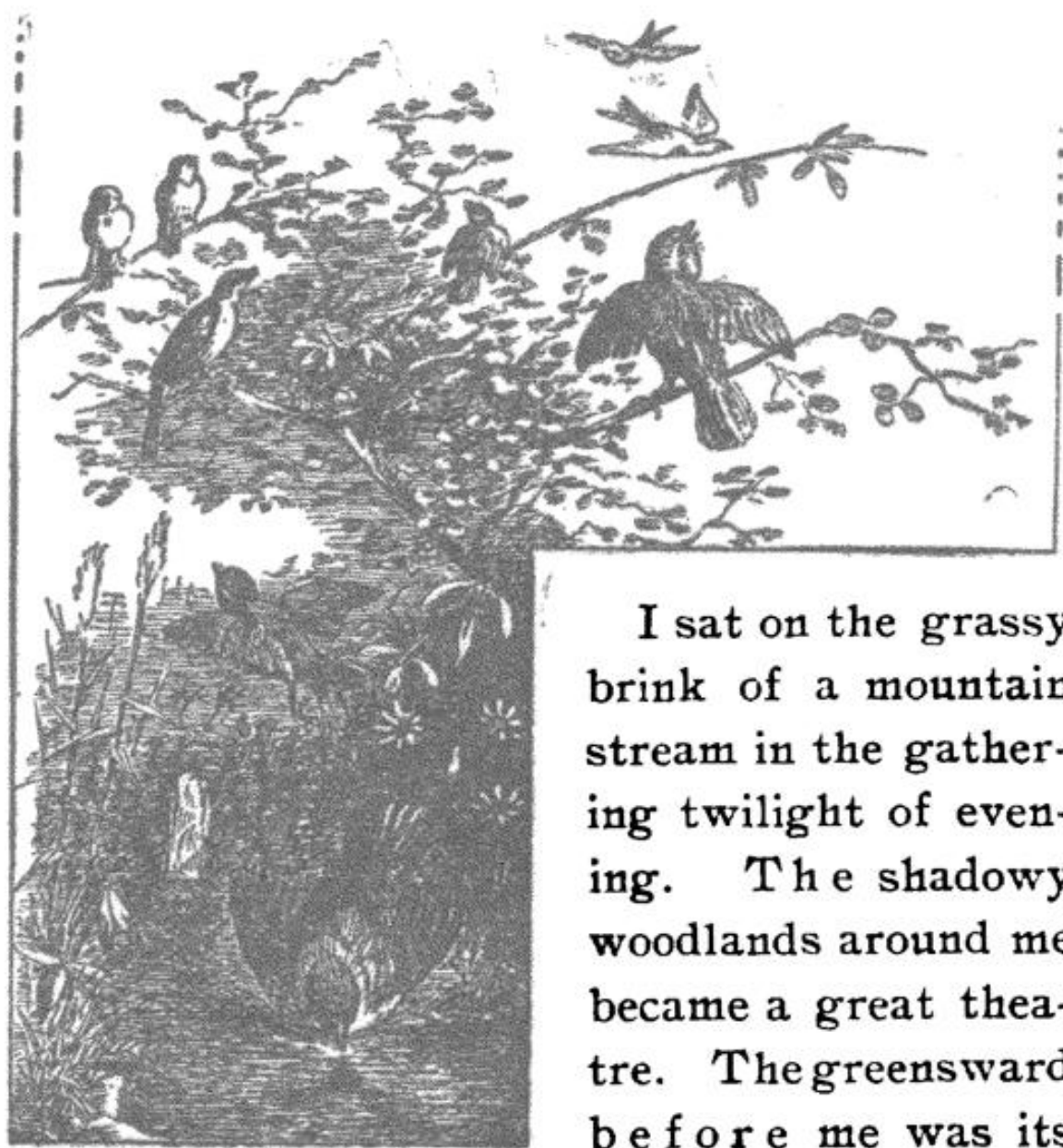
I saw Raphael spread his visions of beauty in immortal colors.

I sat under the spirit of Paganini's power. The flow of his melody turned the very air into music. I thought I was in the presence of Divinity as I listened to the warbles, and murmurs, and the ebb and flow of the silver tides, from his violin. And I said: Music is the dearest gift of God to man. The sea, the forest, the field, and the meadow, are the very fountain heads of music.

I believe that Mozart, and Mendelssohn, and Schubert, and Verdi, and all the great masters,

caught their sweetest dreams from nature's musicians. I think their richest airs of mirth, and gladness, and joy, were stolen from the purling rivulet and the rippling river. I believe their grandest inspirations were born of the tempest, and the thunder, and the rolling billows of the angry ocean.

NATURE'S MUSICIANS.



I sat on the grassy brink of a mountain stream in the gathering twilight of evening. The shadowy woodlands around me became a great theatre. The greensward before me was its stage.

The tinkling bell of a passing herd rang up the curtain, and I sat there all alone in the hush

of the dying day and listened to a concert of nature's musicians who sing as God hath taught them to sing. The first singer that entered my stage was Signor Grasshopper. He mounted a mullein leaf and sang, and sang, and sang, until Professor Turkey Gobbler slipped up behind him with open mouth, and Signor Grasshopper vanished from the footlights forevermore. And as Professor Turkey Gobbler strutted off my stage with a merry gobble, the orchestra opened before me with a flourish of trumpets. The katydid led off with a trombone solo; the cricket chimed in with his E. flat cornet; the bumble-bee played on his violoncello, and the jay-bird, laughed with his piccolo. The music rose to grandeur with the deep bass horn of the big black beetle; the mocking bird's flute brought me to tears of rapture, and the screech-owl's fife made me want to fight. The tree-frog blew his alto horn; the jar-fly clashed his tinkling cymbals; the woodpecker rattled his kettledrum, and the locust jingled his tambourine. The music rolled along like a sparkling river in sweet accompaniment with the oriole's leading violin. But it suddenly hushed when I heard a ripple of laughter among the hollyhocks before the door



LOVE AMONG THE HOLLYHOCKS.

of a happy country home. I saw a youth standing there in the shadows with his arm around "something" and holding his sweetheart's hand in his. He bent forward; lip met lip, and there

was an explosion like the squeak of a new boot. The lassie vanished into the cottage; the lad vanished over the hill, and as he vanished he swung his hat in the shadows, and sang back to her his happy love song.

Did you never hear a mountain love song?
This is the song he sang:

"Oh, when she saw me coming she rung her hands and
cried,
She said I was the prettiest thing that ever lived or died.
Oh, run along home Miss Nancy, get along home Miss Nancy,
Run along home Miss Nancy, down in Rockinham."

The birds inclined their heads to listen to his song as it died away on the drowsy summer air.

That night I slept in a mansion; but I "closed my eyes on garnished rooms to dream of meadows and clover blooms," and love among the hollyhocks. And while I dreamed I was serenaded by a band of mosquitoes. This is the

song they sang:

"Hush my dear, lie still and
slumber;
Holy angels guard thy bed;
Heavenly 'skeeters' without
number
Buzzing 'round your old
bald head! ! !"



PREACHER'S PARADISE.

There is no land on earth which has produced such quaint and curious characters as the great mountainous regions of the South, and yet no country has produced nobler or brainier men.

When I was a barefooted boy my grandfather's old grist mill was the Mecca of the mountaineers. They gathered there on the rainy days to talk politics and religion, and to drink "mountain" dew and fight. Adam Wheezer was a tall, spindle-shanked old settler as dark as an Indian, and he wore a broad, hungry grin that always grew broader at the sight of a fat sheep. The most prominent trait of Adam's character, next to his love of mutton, was his bravery. He stood in the mill one day with his empty sack under his arm, as usual, when Bert Lynch, the bully of the mountains, with an eye like a game rooster's, walked up to him and said: "Adam, you've bin a-slanderin' of me, an' I'm a-gwine to give you a thrashin'." He seized Adam by the throat and backed him up

der the meal spout. Adam opened his mouth to squall and it spouted meal like a whale. He made a surge for breath and liberty and tossed Bert away like a feather. Then he shot out of the mill door like a rocket, leaving his old battered plug hat and one prong of his coat tail in the hands of the enemy. He ran through the creek and knocked it dry as he went. He made a bee line for my grandfather's house, a quarter of a mile away, on the hill. He burst into the sitting-room, covered with meal and panting like a bellowsed horse, frightening my grandmother almost into hysterics. The old lady screamed and shouted: "What in the world is the matter, Adam?" Adam replied: "That thev durned Bert Lynch is down yander a-tryin' to raise a fuss with me."

But every dog has his day. Brother Billy Patterson preached from the door of the mill on the following Sunday. It was his first sermon in that "neck of the woods," and he began his ministrations with a powerful discourse, hurling his anathemas against Satan and sin and every kind of wickedness. He denounced whiskey. He branded the bully as a brute and a moral coward, and personated Bert, having witnessed

his battle with Adam. This was too much for the champion. He resolved to “thrash” Brother Patterson, and in a few days they met at the mill. Bert squared himself and said: “Parson, you had your turn last Sunday; it’s mine to-day. Pull off that broadcloth an’ take your medicine. I’m a-gwine to suck the marrow out’n them ole bones o’ yourn.” The pious preacher plead for peace, but without avail. At last he said: “Then, if nothing but a fight will satisfy you, will you allow me to kneel down and say my prayer before we fight?” “O yes, that’s all right parson,” said Bert. “But cut yer prayer short, for I’m a-gwine to give you a good sound thrashin’.”

The preacher knelt and thus began to pray: “Oh Lord, Thou knowest that when I killed Bill Cummings, and John Brown, and Jerry Smith, and Levi Bottles, that I did it in self defense. Thou knowest, Oh Lord, that when I cut the heart out of young Sliger, and strewed the ground with the brains of Paddy Miles, that it was forced upon me, and that I did it in great agony of soul. And now, Oh Lord, I am about to be forced to put in his coffin, this poor miserable wretch, who has attacked me here to-day.

Oh Lord, have mercy upon his soul and take care of his helpless widow and orphans when he is gone!”

And he arose whetting his knife on his shoe-sole, singing:

“Hark, from the tomb a doleful sound,
Mine ears attend the cry.”

But when he looked around, Bert was gone. There was nothing in sight but a little cloud of dust far up the road, following in the wake of the vanishing champion.



BROTHER ESTEP AND THE TRUMPET.

During the great revival which followed Brother Patterson's first sermon and effective prayer, the hour for the old-fashioned Methodist love feast arrived. Old Brother Estep, in his enthusiasm on such occasions sometimes "stretched his blanket." It was his glory to get up a sensation among the brethren. He rose and said: "Bretheren, while I was a-walk-in' in my gyardin late yisterday evenin', a-meditatin' on the final eend of the world, I looked up, an' I seed Gabrael raise his silver trumpet, which was about fifty foot long, to his blazin' lips, an' I hearn him give it a toot that knocked me into the fence corner an' shuck the very taters out'n the ground."

"Tut, tut," said the old parson, "don't talk that way in this meeting; we all know you didn't hear Gabrael blow his trumpet." The old man's wife jumped to her feet to help her husband out, and said: "Now parson, you set down there. Don't you dispute John's word that-away—He mout a-hearn a toot or two."

"WAMPER-JAW" AT THE JOLLIFICATION.

The sideboard of those good old times would have thrown the prohibition candidate of to-day into spasms. It sparkled with cut glass decanters full of the juices of corn, and rye, and apple. The old Squire of the mill "Deestrick" had as many sweet, buzzing friends as any flower garden or cider press in Christendom. The most industrious bee that sucked at the Squire's sideboard was old "Wamper-jaw." His mouth reached from ear to ear, and was inlaid with huge gums as red as vermilion; and when he laughed it had the appearance of lightning. On the triumphant day of the Squire's re-election to his great office, when everything was lovely and "the goose hung high," he was surrounded by a large crowd of his fellow citizens, and Thomas Jefferson, in his palmiest days, never looked grander than did the Squire on this occasion. He was attired in his best suit of homespun, the choicest product of his wife's dye pot. His immense vest with its broad luminous

stripes, checked the rotundity of his ample stomach like the lines of latitude and longitude, and resembled a half finished map of the United States. His blue jeans coat covered his body as the waters cover the face of the great deep, and its huge collar encircled the back of his head like the belts of light around a planet.

The Squire was regaling his friends with his latest side-splitting jokes. Old “Wamper-jaw” threw himself back in his chair and exploded with peal after peal of laughter. But suddenly he looked around and said: “Gen-tul-men, my jaw’s flew out’n jint!”

His comrades seized him and pulled him all over the yard trying to get it back. Finally old “Wamper-jaw” mounted his mule, and with pounding heels, rode, like Tam O’Shanter, to the nearest doctor who lived two miles away. The doctor gave his jaw a mysterious yank and it popped back into socket. “Wamper-jaw” rushed back to join in the festivities at the Squire’s. The glasses were filled again; another side-splitting joke was told, another peal of laughter went ’round, when “Wamper-jaw” threw his hand to his face and said: “Gen-tul-men, she’s out agin!!!” There was another

hasty ride for the doctor. But in the years that followed; "Wamper-jaw" was never known to laugh aloud. On the most hilarious occasions he merely showed his gums.



"WAMPER-JAW."

THE TINTINNABULATION OF THE DINNER-BELLS.

How many millions dream on the lowest planes of life! How few ever reach the highest and like stars of the first magnitude, shed their light upon the pathway of the marching centuries! What multitudes there are whose horizons are lighted with visions and dreams of the flesh pots and soup bowls,—whose Fallstaffian aspirations never rise above the fat things of this earth, and whose ear flaps are forever inclined forward, listening for the dinner bells!

“The bells, bells, bells!

What a world of pleasure their harmony foretells!

The bells, bells, bells, bells, bells, bells!

The tintinnabulation of the dinner bells!”

In my native mountains there once lived one of these old gluttonous dreamers. I think he was the champion eater of the world. Many a time I have seen him at my grandfather's table, and the viands and battercakes vanished “like the baseless fabric of a vision,”—he left not “a wreck behind.” But one day, in the voracity

of his shark-like appetite, he unfortunately undertook too large a contract for the retirement of an immense slice of ham. It scraped its way down his rebellious esophagus for about two inches, and lodged as tightly as a bullet in a rusty gun. His prodigious Adam's apple suddenly shot up to his chin; his eyes protruded, and his purple neck craned and shortened by turns, like a trombone in full blast. He scrambled from the table and pranced about the room like a horse with blind staggers. My grandfather sprang at him and dealt him blow after blow in the back, which sounded like the blows of a mallet on a dry hide; but the ham wouldn't budge. The old man ran out into the yard and seized a plank about three feet long, and rushed into the room with it drawn.

"Now William," said he, "get down on your all-fours." William got down. "Now William, when I hit, you swallow." He hit, and it popped like a Winchester rifle.

William shot into the corner of the room like a shell from a mortar, but in a moment he was seated at his place at the table again, with a broad grin on his face. "Is it down William?" shouted the old man. "Yes, Mr. Haynes,



"WHEN I HIT, YOU SWALLOW."

the durned thing's gone,—please pass the ham."

I thought how vividly that old glutton illustrated the fools who, in their effort to gulp down the sensual pleasures of this world, choke the soul, and nothing but the clap-board of hard experience, well laid on, can dislodge the ham, and restore the equilibrium.

PHANTOMS OF THE WINE CUP.



A little below the glutton lies the plane of the drunkard whose visions and dreams are bounded by the horizon of a still tub. "A little wine for the stomach's sake is good," but in the trembling hand of a drunkard, every crimson drop that glows in the cup is crushed from the roses that once bloomed on the cheeks of some helpless woman. Every phantom of beauty that dances in it is a devil; and yet, millions quaff, and with a hideous laugh, go staggering to the grave.



THE MISSING LINK.

A little below the plane of the drunkard is the dude, that missing link between monkey and man, whose dream of happiness is a single eyeglass, a kangaroo strut, and three hours of conversation without a sensible sentence; whose only conception of life is to splurge, and flirt, and spend his father's fortune.

“Out of the fullness of his heart his mouth singeth:”

“I'm a dandy; I'm a swell,
Just from college, can't you tell?
I'm the beau of every belle;
I'm the swellest of the swell.

I'm the King of all the balls,
I'm a Prince in banquet halls.
My daddy's rich, they know it well,
I'm the swellest of the swell.”

NIGHTMARE.

Umhappily for us all, in the world of visions and dreams, there is a dark side to human life. Here have been dreamed out all the crimes which have steeped our race in shame since the expulsion from Eden, and all the wars that have cursed mankind since the birth of history. Alexander the Great was a monster whose sword drank the blood of a conquered world. Julius Cæsar marched his invincible armies, like juggernauts, over the necks of fallen nations. Napoleon Bonaparte rose with the morning of the nineteenth century, and stood, like some frightful comet, on its troubled horizon. Distracted with the dream of conquest and empire, he hovered like a god on the verge of battle. Kings and emperors stood aghast. The sun of Austerlitz was the rising sun of his glory and power, but it went down, veiled in the dark clouds of Waterloo, and Napoleon the Great, uncrowned, unthroned, and stunned by the dreadful shock that annihilated the Grand Army

and the Old Guard, “wandered aimlessly about on the lost field,” in the gloom that palled a fallen empire, as Hugo describes him, “the somnambulist of a vast, shattered dream.”

INFIDELITY.

It is in the desert of evil, where virtue trembles to tread, where hope falters, and where faith is crucified, that the infidel dreams. To him, all there is of heaven is bounded by this little span of life; all there is of pleasure and love is circumscribed by a few fleeting years; all there is of beauty is mortal; all there is of intelligence and wisdom is in the human brain; all there is of mystery and infinity is fathomable by human reason, and all there is of virtue is measured by the relations of man to man. To him, all must end in the “tongueless silence of the dreamless dust,” and all that lies beyond the grave is a voiceless shore and a starless sky. To him, there are no prints of deathless feet on its echoless sands, no thrill of immortal music in its joyless air.

He has lost his God, and like some fallen seraph flying in rayless night, he gropes his way on flagging pinions, searching for light where darkness reigns, for life where Death is King.

THE DREAM OF GOD.



I have wondered a thousand times, if an infidel ever looked through a telescope. The universe is the dream of God, and the heavens declare His glory. There is our mighty sun, robed in the brightness of his eternal fires, and with his planets forever wheeling around him. Yonder is Mercury, and Venus, and there is Mars, the

ruddy globe, whose poles are white with snow, and whose other zones seem dotted with seas and continents. Who knows but that his roseate

color is only the blush of his flowers? Who knows but that Mars may now be a paradise inhabited by a blessed race, unsullied by sin, untouched by death? There is the giant orb of Jupiter, the champion of the skies, belted and sashed with vapor and clouds; and Saturn, haloed with bands of light and jeweled with eight ruddy moons; and there is Uranus, another stupendous world, speeding on in the prodigious circle of his tireless journey around the sun. And yet another orbit cuts the outer rim of our system; and on its gloomy pathway, the lonely Neptune walks the cold, dim solitudes of space. In the immeasurable depths beyond appear millions of suns, so distant that their light could not reach us in a thousand years. There, spangling the curtains of the black profound, shine the constellations that sparkle like the crown jewels of God. There are double, and triple, and quadruple suns of different colors, commingling their gorgeous hues and flaming like archangels on the frontier of stellar space. If we look beyond the most distant star, the black walls are flecked with innumerable patches of filmy light like the dewy gossamers of the spider's loom that dot our fields at morn. What

beautiful forms we trace among those phantoms of light! circles, and ellipses, and crowns, and shields, and spiral wreaths of palest silver. And what are they? Did I say phantoms of light? The telescope resolves them into millions of suns, standing out from the oceans of white hot matter that contain the germs of countless systems yet to be. And so far removed from us are these suns, that the light which comes to us from them to-night has been speeding on its way for more than two million years.

What is that white belt we call the milky way. which spans the heavens and sparkles like a Sahara of diamonds? It is a river of stars: it is a gulf stream of suns; and if each of these suns holds in his grasp a mighty system of planets, as ours does, how many multiplied millions of worlds like our own are now circling in that innumerable concourse?

Oh, where are the bounds of this divine conception! Where ends this dream of God? And is there no life and intelligence in all this throng of spheres? Are there no sails on those far away summer seas, no wings to cleave those crystal airs, no forms divine to walk those radiant

fields? Are there no eyes to see those floods of light, no hearts to share with ours that love which holds all these mighty orbs in place?

It cannot be, it cannot be! Surely there is a God! If there is not, life is a dream, human experience is a phantom, and the universe is a flaunting lie!



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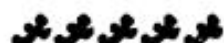
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