THE DAILY EVENING TELEGRAPH-PHILADELPHIA, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1869.

MOTHER PATER'S PUMPKIN.

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BY FRANK R. STOCKTON.

Long ago, in a year when pumpkins were very cheap, and sugar cost but little, and nearly everybody could buy flour, and butter was not more than twelve cents a pound, Thanksgiving Day approached.

On the outskirts of a small village there lived at that time an old woman named Mother Pater. In her garden was a pumpkin vine, on which had grown quite a number of pumpkins; but as the old lady only desired two of these vegetables, she had picked off ali the rest when they were but little green things.

"One of these pumpkins," said she, "is for my Thanksgivin' pies. The other is a sinking fund."

By this she merely wished to convey the idea that if one of these pumpkins failed at the festal period, she would fall back upon the other. I do not know whether she always made herself understood on the subject or not. At any rate, one of these pumpkins did fail-failed most decidedly, and died; so all her hopes were centred on the other one. Her son Isham, a fine boy of fourteen, unusually old for his age, tended this solitary vogetable (or fruit-whichever it was) with all possible care: but when the day, which was three days before Thanksgiving, arrived, it became evident to his mind that "that sinkin'-fund punkin" would not be ripe in time. (It may be here remarked that Thanksgiving day used to come a good deal earlier in the year than it does now.) When Mother Pater came out and looked at her pumpkin, it became evident to her mind that her son Isham was right; there was no hope of the pumpkin ripening in three days. Mother and son looked at each other. What was to be done? They were both persons of resolution and energy, never accustomed to giving way to obstacles. Folding their arms as they stood in the little garden, they busied themselves in thought. In a few moments they both came to the same conclusion-there was nothing to be done but to ask the Governor to postpone Thanksgiving-day. Accordingly Mother Pater went into the house, put on her mob-cap, her spec-tacles, her Sunday short-gown and petticoat, and with her umbrella in one hand, and her trusty staff in the other, she set off for the Governor's house. As she went out of her little gate, her son put into her hand a card on which was written the earliest date at which, in his opinion, the pumpkin could possibly ripen. The old lady put this in her pocket, and told Isham that were she in his place, she would gravel the front path, and whitewash the fence that morning. "To be sure," said she, "nobody may come,

but although the Governor will believe me, of course, when I tell him about my punkin; still to satisfy the people at the State House, he may have to come and see it him. self."

So off went she, trudging bravely along the road, but as for Isham, he only waited until she was out of sight, and then, instead of trying to fix up the old homestead, he ran off to tell all the village that Thanksgiving day was to be put off. When the people heard that Mother Pater had gone to the Governor to have this done, they mourned from the bottom of their hearts, for they knew that she never undertook anything that she did not carry out. And what would become of them? Everything prepared or nearly so; in some houses the pies even made, and the turkeys and geese already killed and hung up to "tender," and all arrangements made to celebrate the following Thursday. If Thanksgiving day was put off, a gloom would settle over the entire community. So, from every hill-top, bonfires blazed and bells were rung, and horns blown, and men mounted in hot House. haste and rode hither and thither to arouse the nonplace, and bring them together to consider their impending fate. Everything was shortly in an uproar; all business was ne glected, and the roads were crowded by the country people hurrying into town. In the meantime, Mother Pater walked by the most direct road to the town, and marched up the main street to the Governor's house, On the way, she met a good many persons whom she knew, and when they asked her what brought her to town, she told them right out. If possible, the town folks were more excited about the matter than the country people. They rang their alarm-bells, and fired off cannon on the green, and shut up their stores, and the circulating library closed, and free lunch was given at all the taverns, and the firemen got out their apparatus (for who knew what might happen?) and the schools were closed. Such a hubbub as arose in that town in about an hour you never heard. When Mother Pater reached Governor's door, she knocked on the knocker, and then straightening herself up, she waited to be let In a few minutes an Irish girl came to the door, and Mother Pater informed her that she wished to see the Governor.

the summest part of the summest and in the village, it would be utterly impossible for that pumpkin to ripen by the following Thur day. Without a word, they looked at each other, and dismay sat upon every coun-tenance. Then, assuring Dame Pater that her case should receive his carnest attention, the Governor, followed b," the committee, returned to town.

When he got home he found all "he citizens, together with all the country people w." had come to town, anxiously awaiting his repost. When he told them what he and the con mittee had seen, such a commotion arose as never before was known in the town. For a while the Governor thought that there was danger of a riot, and he had the militia-bell rung. As most of the disorderly persons be-longed to the militia, and had to go to their halls to put on their uniform when the bell rang, comparative quiet was soon regiored. Then to the sensible people who remained the Governor said that, as far as he was able to judge of the matter, he could not see how he could help putting off Thanksgiving Day; but if any of them could think of any other expedient ha should be happy to hear it. For a time silence reigned, and people looked at each other with blank faces. At last a happy thought struck a citizen, and he cried out:-

"Let somebody give her a pumpkin!" Like a flash of electricity, this idea ran through the crowd, and altogether they set up a great shout:-

'Give her a pumpkin!'

The very lightning-rods trembled, and all the weathercocks turned round, so tremendous was the burst of enthusiasm. Then every man of the citizens rushed home and got a pumpkin, and hurried away with it to Mother Pater. And every man among the countrymen mounted his horse or his mule, or ran as fast as he could, and got a good pumpkin from his pile and hurried with it to Mother Pater. About sunset they began to arrive, and in an hour Dame Pater's garden, her front yard, her back yard, her cellar, her parlor, her kitchen, her bed-rooms, and her garret were all filled with shining yellow pumpkins. In the wood-shed Mother Pater and Isham had to eat their supper; and in that shed, although the night was cool, they had to sleep.

The next day, these two arose to look at their pumpkins. A fine large one was selected for the Thanksgiving pies, and the rest Dame Pater determined to give to the poor. So she sent out Isham on Mr. Scott's horse and gave him the dinner-horn, and he went all over town and country for two days and invited the poor to come and cat pumpkin-pie on Thanksgiving day. Hearing of this, a great many folks gave flour and sugar, and butter (for, you know, they were all cheap in those days), and all the women set to work and every one of Mother Pater's pumpkins was baked into pies.

And on that Thanksgiving Day there was not a poor person anywhere within twenty miles who had not as much pumpkin-pie as he could eat, and even the smallest child had a whole one. Everybody who was rich could cat dinner that day without thinking that anybody else was suffering; and everybody who was poor had no occasion to envy the rich. All looked happy and gay. Joy sparkled in every direction. I suppose the folks could have got up a Thanksgiving-dinner for the poor, even if Mother Pater's pumpkin had ripened; but then, you see, they didn't think of it.

As for the Governor, he was well satisfied with the way things had turned out; but he didn't want to put Thanksgiving Day in such jeopardy again. So the next year he made it come a good deal later, when everybody's pumpkins would be sure to be ripe, and it has been that way over since .- Hearth and

in the sunniest part of the sunniest shed in | candidate for Congress from his district in Indiana.

During the early parts of the story, the Era had denunciations of Daniel Webster's speech at the opening of the Erie Railroad, and an attack on A. Oakey Hall for a slander on Kossuth, as the poor exile was on his way to our shores

After three months this editorial notice appeared:

"Uncle Tom's Cabin .-- We receive letters by every "Andi inquiring whether 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' will be pub." hed in book form after its completion in the Era. Mrs. Stowe having taken out a copyright, of course h. ends to publish it in a separate form. When it w'll be so published, and what will be the price of it, we do not know. A note from the author touching these points might be of pervice." service.

Little exuberant notices like this occasionsly appeared, but while the merits of the story were manifest to all its readers, the lady and her friends were taking care that it should have all due attention clsewhere, and a month after it commenced the stereotyhers were working on it for the book.

The novel ran in the Era ten months, and that paper said on April 1, 1852:-"Mrs. Stowe has at last brought her work to a close. The last chapters appear in this week of the Era. With our consent, the Boston publishers issued an edition of 5000 on the 20th of March, but it has already been exhausted, and another edition of 5000 has appeared."

While the story was going on, the Era was a free trade, anti-slavery paper, and was little helped by the tariff people anywhere. The New York Tribune said, at one time, while "Uncle Tom" was running:-""The National Era is about the most unfair and untiring enemy of the Whig party that we know."

In those days, as now, the free sentiment of the pioneers in progress embraced free trade as a cardinal maxim. It appears by the files of the *Era* that Dr. Bailey, pleased with the writings and conscious of the social influence of Mrs. Stowe, had sent her \$100, with a request to write as good a story for the amount as she could. Afterwards he sent her \$200, and finally a third payment was made by mutual agreement. On this literary occasion Mrs. Stowe involved herself in a quarrel with the New York Observer, which accused her of "a libel on the Rev. Joel Parker, for which that Christian minister had brought suit against her, laying the damages at \$20,000.

Two or three things seem to be evident about this story-that it grew unconsciously, and told itself by the same sort of process that India rubber stretches. The weekly cry for copy kept the writer up to work, and several weeks she failed to come to time with her chapters; and also that its business interests were managed with genuine shrewdness. As soon as Mrs. Stowe became aware that she had done a good thing, she turned it into property, and guarded her title. Fifteen years before "Uncle Tom" (Richard Hildreth) wrote "Archy Moore; or, The White Slave," for which, after fresh labor, he obtained a pitiful publisher, and yet he was able to make up the circulation of this strong novel during the fever attendant upon "Uncle Tom," and it became remunerative to him.

This is the newspaper history of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," for which, next to Mrs. Stowe, the world is indebted to Gamaliel Bailey, Doctor of Medicine and Philanthropy-a Philadelphian.

When Dr. Bailey died, after his gentle life but stormy career, his widow could have sold the Era for \$25,000. She preferred to continue it under her own management, and it speedily went down. Mrs. Bailey is now a resident of Washington City. HOSIERY, ETC.

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"And where's your card?" said the servant. "My card ?" replied Mother Pater. "How in the world you should have found out I had one, I don't know, but here it is. What do you want with it ?"

"To take it to his honor, sure, and see if he'll see you," said the girl; and leaving the old lady in the hall, she went up stairs with the card which Isham had given his mother. Before she reached the Governor's study, she looked at the card, which was one of an old pack which Isham and his mother used to play cribbage with before eight of the hearts and six of the clubs got lost.

"Arrah!" said the girl. "The Queen of Spades, is she? If I'd known that, I'd taken a better look at her. 'Tisn't every day that the Queen of Spades is to be seen walkin' about with an umbrella.

When she handed the card to the Governor, he glanced at it and turned pale. Being a profound man, he felt sure that the card meant that a game was about to be playedin other words, treason-and that it would ripen in twelve days! Hastening down to meet the mysterious messenger, he found it was Mother Pater.

When he heard what she had to tell him, though relieved, he was still very much troubled, especially as he saw the matter had got out, and that the street and green in front of his house were filled by an agitated crowd. What to say to satisfy the old lady he knew not, and he asked her if she was sure her pumpkin would not be ripe in time.

"I'm as sure as sure can be," she replied, "and so is my son Isham; but if you are not satisfied, or if any of these other gentlemen are not satisfied (for the Cabinet had now come down stairs), you are perfectly welcome to come and look for yourselves."

So the Governor thought it would be better, perhaps, to go and see exactly how the thing stood; and he therefore called together a committee composed of gentlemen from the Legislature, a couple of clergymen, some merchants, and a president of a bank, and they all went out to look at Mother Pater's

pumpkin. When they reached the garden, escorted by Isham and his mother, they saw in a moment the old lady's story was correct. Even if laid Register, had been nominated as the Whig

UNCLE TOM'S CABIN. A Business Peep Into It.

The Washington correspondent of the Chicago Tribune writes:-

Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe has been the heroine of two extraordinary acts of notoriety, both publications, and in this fresh period of the last of them. I have taken leisure to walk over to the Capitol and examine in the library there perhaps the only complete file of the National Era existing, wherein she printed her great novel.

The Era is a weekly folio paper, long ago extinct, of seven columns, printed on soft, thin, cotton rag paper, and announced as edited by G. Bailey, with John G. Whittier for corresponding editor. It is mainly a literary paper, and partly an anti-slavery paper, with news, editorials, etc., thrown in. The first look that you get of it shows you that it is the paper of a man of principle, and a man of literary taste. For some time before Mrs. Stowe wrote much for it, there were deferential notices of her name, and then a few little contributions to her credit, but the stock story-writer for the paper was Mrs, E. D. E. N. Southworth, who, if she had been a woman of education, would nave been a better novelist than Mrs. Stowe; for she has more contrivance, vigor, and theatre than the greater fame can lay claim to, and is the victim of her imperfect opportunities in early life. There is never a strong portraiture in Mrs. Stowe's stories; her people are mere vehicles for various conditions and emotions to show themselves upon. Dred was her only free agent, and he was a dreadfully clumsy angel of darkness. Take notice, too, that in Mrs. Stowe's Southern stories, none of the whites speak in Southern white fashion; every mortal one of them tuned his ear east by north of Manhattan Island.

However, on the 1st of January, 1851, at the commencement of the Uncle Tom volume, this announcement appeared:-

"Mrs. E. D. E. N. Southworth, the American no-velist, who first became known to the public through the columns of our paper, has engaged to furnish a story for our new volume."

It was not till the 8th of May, in the same volume, that the following respectful annonncement appeared:---

"A new story by Mrs. Stowe, "Week after next we propose to commence in the *Kra* the publication of a new story by Mrs. H. B. Stowe, the title of which will be 'Uncle Tom's Cabin; or, The Man that was a Thing.' It will pro-bably be of the length of the tale by Mrs. South-worth, entitled 'Retribution.'

worth, entitled 'Retribution.' "Mrs. Slowe is one of the most gifted and popular of American writers. We announce her story in ad-vance, that none of our subscribers, through neglect to renew their subscriptions, may lose the beginning of II, and that those who desire to read the produc-tion as II may appear in successive numbers of the *Era*, may send us their names in season."

The next notice appeared on May 22:-

"The first two chapters have been received, but we shall not be able to begin their publication till week after next."

The story finally appeared June 5, 1851, with the better sub-title of "Life Among the Lowly," and over it was the shrewd precautionary announcement:-"Copyright secured by the author."

While the story was going along, week after week, a biography appeared of B. F. Wade, Senator elect from Ohio, and also, on June 26, the third week, the news that Schuyler Colfax, the proprietor of the St. Joseph

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