

The Genius of the Roadside.

By F. B. CALLOWAY.

It is marvelous that a boy's fortune should turn upon a horse shoe, and yet, for many of us, some of the greatest events of our lives have turned upon as small a pivot.

Even in the humblest lives, little opportunities he concealed all along the way like fairy doors which, when the right spring is touched, will fly open, revealing a glorious future.

One fair summer day a distinguished looking gentleman might have been seen riding in his carriage along a country road in Ulster county, New York.

His name was Aaron Burr—not then the despised and haunted Aaron Burr we read of now.

He was then Senator Burr, and was one of the most talented and highly esteemed men in our country.

He was not an evil looking man; on the contrary, his was a kindly, pleasant face, lit up with brilliant black eyes.

But, about the horse's shoe: As he was driving rapidly along, one of his horses lost a shoe, and he stopped at the next blacksmith shop to have it replaced.

It was a lonely country place, and while the blacksmith was at work Burr strolled through the woods and fields that lay around.

Returning, he noticed on the side of the stable, near the blacksmith's shop, a sketch in charcoal of his own horses and carriage.

He was startled at first, it was so wonderfully accurate and spirited. He knew, too, that it must have been executed in a very few minutes, and he stood for some time gazing at it in admiration.

Turning around at last, he noticed a boy dressed in coarse homespun standing a little way off.

"Who did that?" asked Burr, pointing at the picture.

"I did it," replied the boy.

The Senator was astonished. Entering into conversation, he discovered that the boy, although ignorant, was intellectual.

He also found that this young artist had never had any instruction in drawing, and that he was apprenticed to the blacksmith business for six months.

Burr wrote a few lines on a piece of paper, saying as he wrote:

"My boy, you are too smart to stay here all your life. If ever you should want to change your employment and see the world, just put a clean shirt in your pocket, come to New York, and go straight to that address," handing the boy a paper.

A child's intuitions are quick, and as the boy gazed into his kindly face bent down to him, he felt that he had won a friend that he could love and trust.

The traveler's horses now being ready, he mounted his carriage and was out of sight in a few minutes, while the bewildered boy returned to his work in the blacksmith shop.

He treasured the precious bit of paper, however, and many a day as he worked the blacksmith's bellows that fanned the glowing embers, he built up golden dream-castles, while brave, ambitious thoughts leaped up into his heart, as the flames leaped up from the livid coals.

Months passed away and these circumstances had nearly faded from the busy Senator's mind. In his beautiful home at Richmond Hill he was sitting at breakfast one morning with his daughter Theodosia.

It was upon this daughter, so lovely, so pure, that Aaron Burr lavished the wealth of a soul overflowing with secret tenderness. Long after his fall from power, she, it is said, was the solitary star shining with beautiful lustre over the rough and darkened pathway of his life.

It was on this memorable morning that a servant entered the breakfast room and placed in Col. Burr's hand a small paper parcel, saying it was brought by a boy who was waiting outside.

Theodosia gazed on wonderingly as her father opened the parcel and found a coarse, country made, clean shirt.

Of course they both laughed merrily over it, and Burr, supposing it to be some mistake, ordered the boy to be shown in.

Who should enter but our genius of the roadside, blushing in confusion. By the elegance of the room and the presence of the beautiful daughter he was still more abashed, but the face of his friend reassured him.

Very modestly he placed in Burr's hand a piece of worn paper, the one he had treasured for so many months. As Burr traced the almost illegible words he recognized his own handwriting, and a new light flashed over his face.

Taking the lad's trembling hands in his own, he gave him such a welcome as only warm, generous hearts know how to give. Then presenting the lad to his daughter, he told her his story.

She gave him her hand at once, for she was as much pleased with him as was her father.

From that hour the boy was loved and cared for as one of the family. He was educated and placed under one of the best of masters in the art he had shown such a talent for.

Young Vanderlyn, for that was the boy's name, was afterwards sent to Europe by Burr, where he spent five years in the study of painting, until he became, it is said, an artist worthy of the name.

Years and years afterwards, when Burr was wandering in Europe, a poor, lonely exile, Vanderlyn was exhibiting pictures at the Louvre, Paris.

well known "Landing of Columbus." He also painted portraits of Aaron Burr and his daughter. He died a few years ago at Kingston, not far from the spot where he drew the charcoal sketch which decided his fortune.

As for Aaron Burr, the way of the transgressor is hard, but the Lord is more merciful than man. In his old age, Burr was hated by the country that once loved him. He was left homeless, almost friendless, but he was not left destitute. The bread cast upon the waters in his happier days all returned to him.

As he had once loved to care for and shelter the poor and homeless, so he himself in his last days was sheltered and cared for tenderly.



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ANECDOTES OF RATS.

Many instances have been recorded of the display of intelligence by rats, to which we beg leave to add the following:

A farmer's wife in the west of Scotland remarked that the cream on the surface of the milk in her dairy was often interfered with.

At first, she suspected that some of her children had taken the unwarrantable liberty of dipping pieces of bread in it, but she had nothing to confirm this suspicion; and, by-and-by, she noticed strange little streaks of cream on the edges of the milk-basins, as if a string had been dipped in and drawn out, so as to leave a mark.

At last she discovered the secret. The cream was stolen by rats, which got upon the edges of the earthenware basins containing the milk, and not being able to reach down to it, a depth of several inches, nor daring to go down, as they could never have climbed up the smooth surface again, dipped in the tips of their long tails, drew them up loaded with the rich cream, and then licked them.

An arrangement of the little basins, such that the rats could not get upon the edges of them, put an end to all further depredations of this kind. There was surely something more than instinct in this case in the procedure of the rats.

We have something still to tell of the ingenuity of rats. A family in a country house in Hertfordshire had a fancy for renting ducks, but could not well do so on account of rats, which systematically got hold of and carried away the young ducklings, even from close to their mother.

With a view to circumvent the rats, the maternal duck and her young were housed for the night under a coop, which admitted of no opening for the furtive intruders. The rats were not to be so easily cheated out of their prey. On discovering that the mother duck and her family were closely shrouded from intrusion, they devised a pretty plan of engineering, which was eminently successful.

In the course of a single night they excavated a tunnel going below the outer edge of the coop to its interior, and thus very neatly, without producing any alarm, stole every duckling under the guardianship of the mother.

Two rats of the same colony performed a feat quite as ingenious. A trap which was baited for their capture was habitually plundered without securing a single rat.

They had evidently invented some plan for safely stealing away the bait, and what the plan was, could only be learned by setting a watch on the trap. We shall explain how the theft was effected. The trap was of the kind which is sometimes employed for catching mice. It was a box with a sliding door, which was sustained by mechanism connected with the bait. U. the bait being nibbled at, the door descended and makes the mouse a prisoner.

The two rats saw through the device, and resorted to the following very simple but effectual method to take away the cheese, and yet escape imprisonment: One of them placed itself under the door, so that it might fall on its back, while the other crept in and successfully carried off the morsel of cheese. The first rat then drew it from under the door, and joined its associate. This demonstration of rat intelligence, like the preceding incident, is of recent occurrence.

A Boy's Dream.—In June, 1752, Robt Aikenhead, a farmer in Denshart or Arnhall, England, went to a market called Terrenty Fair, where he had a large sum of money to receive.

His eldest son, Robt, a boy between seven and eight years of age, went to take upon a grassy knoll, and before sunset was fast asleep.

Although the boy had never been far from home, he was immediately carried in imagination to Terrenty market, where he dreamed that his father, after receiving his money, set out on his return home, and was followed by two ill-looking fellows, who, when he had got to the western dykes of Enelmsland, and a little more than a mile from home, attacked and attempted to rob him; whereupon the boy thought he ran to his assistance, and with a sword, against which he had no other defense than his stick and his hands, which were considerably mangled by grasping the blade.

Upon sight of the country people, the villain who had the sword raised, but the other, not being able, was apprehended and lodged in jail. Meantime there was a hue and cry after young Robert, whose mother, missing him and finding the cattle on the hill, was in the utmost anxiety, concluding he had fallen into some water or peat moss. But her joy and surprise were equally great when her husband returned with the boy and told her how wonderfully both his money and his life had been saved by his son's dream.

A SLIGHT MISTAKE.—The Cincinnati correspondent of the Cleveland Leader tells this story about the adventures of a stranger in the Constitutional Convention of Ohio:

A spruce, trim fellow came into the Convention on Tuesday, before it began business. He seemed kind of restless, like a cat in a strange corner, and hung around the Clerk's desk in a timid manner, waiting for some one to ask him what he wanted, but no one asked him, and he finally mustered up courage to inquire of one of the Secretaries for the Chief Clerk, and Rhodes was pointed out to him; and the shadows of surprise, but his anxious face as he approached the solemn Secretary and said:

"I believe you are the clerk; well, I want to join this Convention."

Dud looked at him inquiringly, and said: "Want to do what?"

"I want to join this Convention."

A look of pity and commiseration came over Dud's thoughtful face, as doubts of the fellow's sanity began to dawn upon him, and he said:

"Why my dear sir, I don't understand you."

"Why, I am from Indianapolis (and he grew four inches taller); I am acquainted with Gen. Sol. Meredith and Gov. Hendricks (he straightened about four inches more); and I want to join this Convention! This is the Short-horned Convention, ain't it?"

A Short-horned Cattle Convention met at Mozart Hall the same day, and the delegate from Indianapolis had got things mixed.

A wag who thought to have a joke at the expense of an Irish provision dealer, inquired: "Can you supply me with a yard of pork?"

"Yes, sir; here, Pat, give the gentleman three pigs' feet."

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Another Accidental Phenomenon.

The Virginia City (See) Enterprise, four or five days ago, published a report of a fire in the western part of the city, which was started by observing a foot in height shooting up out of a hole near the Ophir works. It was so

thought that the old timber, which was on fire, and three or four men were the spectators to see what could be done to smother the flames. On reaching the shaft, however, they found that there was no smell of smoke, and also that the

posed fire was a light smoke, and that it had never before seen in its history.

ness and in the strange circumstances, it was somewhat of a puzzle. The

about, the facts of the case were like a puzzle. Two of the men were

were miners returning from their dinner pails in the street, and

was observed that the path was of a brilliant steel-blue color. The

ing and there was a smell of the same gas, and also that there was

of the same gas, and also that there was a smell of the same gas, and

The light came up the shaft, and

square shaft, and seen at the top

rose up through the falling water,

resembled one of the shooting stars

in the aurora borealis, and it

have something of the same

inconstant nature. Although the

felt creeping over their heads,

tious awe, they still had courage

age to approach the shaft, and

A strange sight was here

interior of the shaft seemed

to be all over with the same

timbers on the sides were

brilliant, and each shaft was

or bit of fungus seemed

rays that streamed steadily

reactions. A warm, steady

ascended from the shaft, and

low, and there was a smell

musty smell. All those who

the shaft afterward felt

square shaft, and seen at the

resembled one of the shooting

in the aurora borealis, and it

have something of the same

felt creeping over their heads,

tious awe, they still had

age to approach the shaft, and