

# American Monitor.

"OUR COUNTRY—MAY IT ALWAYS BE RIGHT—BUT RIGHT OR WRONG OUR COUNTRY."

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## Poetical.

### THE WELL-DIGGER.

AN OVER-TRUE BALLAD.

BY JOHN G. SAXE.

Come, listen all, while I relate  
What recently befel  
Upon a farm down in Maine,  
While digging of a well.

For many a yard he dug and delved;  
And still he dug in vain;  
"A hole!" quoth he, "an' water seem'd  
Prohibited in Maine!"

And still he dug and delved away,  
And still the well was dry;  
The only water to be found  
Was in the farmer's eye.

For by the breaking of the bank  
That back'd his station,  
The water in his hole was dash'd  
Of future liquidation!

And now his hands were running fast,  
And he had said, no doubt,  
That just when the earth eav'd in  
No happen'd to be out!

"I have a happy thought!"  
Exclaimed this wicked man—  
"I'll dig another such cursed well  
Asa a pretty plan!"

"I'll dig no straight, and when my wife  
And 'en my neighbors know  
What's happened to my digging here,  
They'll think that I'm below!"

And so to save my precious life,  
They'll dig the well no doubt,  
Deeper than 'twas dug at first,  
Before they find me out!"

And so he hid him in the barn  
To watch all the busy day,  
While the digging of his well  
In this deceitful way.

But list what grief and shame befel  
The false, ungrateful man,  
Who while he slowly watch'd to see  
The working of his plan:

The neighbors all with one accord  
To each other said:  
"With such a weight of earth above  
The man is surely dead."

And then the wife, with pious care,  
All needless cost to save,  
Said: "Since the Lord hath willed it so,  
I'll let it be his grave!"

## Miscellaneous.

### THE WRONG MAN IN THE WRONG PLACE.

BY CLARA AUGUSTA.

Two people to blame me for what is un-  
pleasant? That is a question I should be  
gladly happy to have solved to my own  
satisfaction and the satisfaction of others—  
One, I had no doubt on the subject; but  
judging from what has happened to me  
in the past few days, I must confess my opin-  
ion somewhat shaken.

I was entirely foreign from my intention  
to create a sensation, or enact a deception,  
when I packed my carpet bag last week, and  
packed my best suit preparatory to setting  
out on a visit to my Aunt Nabby's place.  
Aunt Nabby resides in the northeast cor-  
ner of Maine, in a town which I will denomi-  
nate Ploverville.

I hope the reader will excuse me for allud-  
ing to my personal appearance. I have a  
military air, and perhaps my dress may be a  
little more martial than exactly benefits a  
young man. But the ladies assure me that  
it is becoming to my complexion, and who  
gainsay the ladies?

I have been strongly advised to enlist, but  
I am totally unfit for the service. The smell  
of gunpowder makes me faint, and I never  
held a gun but once in my life, and I was  
fired to my bed for a fortnight afterward.

Not exactly from the effects of the fire, but  
because the confounded fire-arm resented my  
backward handling, and kicked me so severe-  
ly that my right eye was in mourning for  
months, and my nose was knocked out of the  
perpendicular into the oblique.

I had arrived in Ploverville rather late on  
Friday night, and as it was ten miles further  
to my Aunt Nabby's rustic cottage—  
I was put up at the Washington House—  
I was put up at the Washington House—  
I was put up at the Washington House—

I registered my name—P. Sheridan—on  
the hotel book. My christian name is Philo-  
pateus, but owing to the oddity of the title,  
and the ominous length, I rarely write it in  
full.

I got some supper and retired immediately  
to my room. I had just fallen asleep and  
was dreaming serenely of kissing Mattie Be-  
nbow, my sweetheart for the time when I was  
used by a great commotion in the street  
below.

"Ours of—We must see him!"  
"Three cheers for the gallant Phil!"  
I concluded some great character had ar-  
rived in town, and in my anxiety to behold  
a curiosity worth the cost of the ticket,  
I sprang out of bed, I forgot my yel-  
low flannel night-gown, and I threw up my win-  
dow and looked out.

As I had got my eyes fixed on the  
straying crowd below, there was a rap at my  
door.

"Come in!" cried I, fearing to answer  
paranally to the summons lest I should miss  
the chance of seeing the celebrity.

The landlord and landlady came in, but

the lady retreated instantly and remained  
giggling outside the door.

"My dear sir," said the landlord, "you must  
go down. They won't go off till they see  
you."

"They? Who are they?" asked I.

"The people around here," said he. "It  
hain't often such an extinguished character  
comes here, and taint no use to try to put 'em  
off!"

"I'm obliged to them—much obliged to  
them," said I, "but really—"

"Taint no use," said he, doggedly, "you  
must go down, or the Washington House  
will go down. They're sure to do it!"

"Oh, well," said I—"in that case I will  
go down, surely—and I began to dress. In a  
hurry I knocked over the candle and was  
obliged to complete my adornment in the  
dark. I got into my mantles with the  
land part front, but there was no time to  
remedy the error as the vociferous calls of  
the landlord for me to hurry assured me. I  
slowed down the stairs two at a time—stopped  
my supporters, went half way down, and  
was precipitated to the next floor where I  
brought up in the arms of a plump chamber-  
maid, who was evidently waiting on purpose  
to catch me.

Before I could resist, she had planted a  
stinging smack on my nose, and I was  
and cried delightfully to her companions—  
"There! I've kissed him first!"

I mentally rejoiced that Mattie Baker was  
not present, and resolved that she should  
never know anything about it. Mattie is red  
haired, and folks pretend to say that she has  
a temper.

I freed myself from my saluting female had  
advanced to the door.

My appearance was greeted by yells and  
shouts, and cheers perfect deafening. Men,  
women and children to the number of several  
scores, were congregated in front of the  
hotel, waving their hats and handkerchiefs and  
huzzahing.

"There he comes! that's him! three times  
three for the conquering Sheridan!"

"I'm obliged to you, gentlemen and ladies,  
—greatly obliged to you," said I, modestly  
making my best bow.

"To come!" cried the crowd, waving  
frantically about, and swinging their hand-  
kerchiefs most lustily. And I, not wishing to  
be behindhand in the enthusiasm, pulled out  
my handkerchief and swung it, crying at the  
top of my lungs:

"Yes, he comes, he comes! Hurrah!"

"What a martial air," exclaimed an ancient  
female, surveying me through her glasses,  
"he resembles the Duke of Wellington."

"He's married!" said a rosy-  
cheeked girl, in a cloud of yellow curls and  
pink ringlets.

"No, my darling," said I, "but I want to  
be."

"Such a costume," said the ancient lady,  
"Arrang'd like, and such an original cut to the  
—the coverings of the lower extremities—  
"Lord massy!" exclaimed an old lady in a  
poke bonnet, fixing her eyes on my suspenders  
which hung down in front, "I see your  
shoulder straps. I've known our David tell  
a sight about them things!"

"Yes, but they look an amazing lot like  
Jerry's garters!" whispered another old lady  
to whom the remark was addressed.

"I wish to see that fellow," said a  
young man, "I wish to see that fellow, ad-  
vancing to my side. I wish to mention to  
you something which I have heard said of  
you. I deem it my duty as pastor of the  
Ploverville meeting house, to rebuke sin, al-  
though I have heard it remarked that you  
are profane among the soldiers."

"I do not commend you," said I.

"Ah then I will be clearer. I have heard  
that you were addicted to the habit of using  
obscene language, and I beg leave to present  
to you this tract on the Sin of Profanity, hop-  
ing you will peruse it, and profit by it."

"Thank you," said I, "you mean well  
doubtless, but I must say I don't exactly see  
the point."

"What is your opinion of Sherman?" asked  
a brusque little dandy, swinging his rattle,  
and removing his cigar from his mouth  
long enough to propound the question.

"Sherman's a trump!" said I with enthu-  
siasm.

"Ah me!" said my tract distributing friend,  
"he plays cards as well as a general."

"What do you think of the negro race?"  
asked a dark complexioned man.

"I think they're much stronger than the  
negro," cried I, beginning to lose my patience.

"Merciful heaven!" exclaimed the sallow  
faced man, "he is pro-slavery!"

"I have had a conversation with a half dozen  
ladies for the last five minutes—these er-  
women folks would be satisfied with kissing of  
me! They want to have it said that they've  
kissed me!"

I dashed up to the roots of my hair.

"Law, how modest he is!" said one of my  
feminine friends. "He's as red as our gob-  
bler."

The prospect of being kissed by some of  
those pretty girls was decidedly agreeable—  
I felt delicious over it—but those vinegar  
aged old women. I shrunk from the ordeal.  
But I am naturally a gallant man, and re-  
flecting that I could wash my face abundant-  
ly with my own spit, I said:

"Come one, come all!" said I.

They obeyed. They flung their arms  
around my neck, and surrounded me on every  
side. I felt like a pickled sardine. I smelt  
musk, and onion patches, snuff, jockey  
club, hard cider, cognac dough-nuts, baked  
mutton, cinnamon, mustard soap, earlwood  
buds and every other odor under the sun.

"Kissing is a grand invention, but there is  
some objection to it, I think."

At last, they had all kissed me but one, and  
she was standing a little apart, making pre-  
parations. I noticed her with a mighty  
trembling. She was ugly as an ogre, and  
the look of dogged determination on her wiz-  
ened face convinced me that I need hope  
nothing from her mercy.

"I never could taste anything with my  
teeth!" she exclaimed in an undertone, and  
I felt like a ball of lead, and she  
rushed towards me. I grew dizzy with  
prospect, and turning I fled before her like  
the billows before a hurricane.

I had no thought for the figure I cut, my  
only object was to get out of her reach—  
Through the entry—down a flight of back  
stairs, knocking over the hostler and the cook  
who were giggling together on the steps—  
through the yard, where I left the larger  
part of my coat fall in the possession of a  
covetous dog—and over a fence into the open  
country. And all the time I could hear the  
steps of my pursuer close behind me.

"You may run," cried she, "but I'll catch  
you. It shan't be General Sheridan but me. I'll  
do it or die."

"Good gracious!" I so I had been taken for  
General Sheridan. No wonder the people  
turned out on purpose to welcome me.

And still I hurried on. The snow was  
deep—I was nearly blown away, and I sunk  
deeper and deeper at every step. My female

friend gained on me, and just as I fell head-  
long into a concealed mudhole, she grasped  
me by the collar. And before I could clear  
myself, she had done the deed.

She had kissed me! The landlord had  
followed just behind, and I offered him ten  
dollars to get me to my nunt Nabby's that  
night.

I accepted the bribe, and just before day-  
break I sank at the feet of my respected re-  
lative.

"Great Impostion.—A low lit old wretch  
passing himself off as General Phil Sheridan,  
arrived in our village, and put upon the Wash-  
ington House, on Friday evening. There  
was quite a demonstration among our citi-  
zens before the impostor was discovered. The  
bogus General had gone to parts unknown.  
It is supposed he was some drunken lunatic,  
from his conduct."

I make no comments, but judge my sensa-  
tions.

COURTING IN RIGHT STYLE.—"Git out, you  
nasty puppy—let me alone or I will tell your  
ma?" cried out Sally—to her lover Jake—  
"who sat about ten feet from her, pull-  
ing dirt from the chimney jam."

"I want to kiss you, Sal," said Jake.

"Well, perhaps you don't mean to nuther,  
do yer?"

"No, I don't."

"Gussu you're too tarnal scary, you long-  
legged, lantern-jawed, slab-sided, pigeon-  
toed, guttle-kneed owl, you—you hain't got  
a tarnal bit of sense; get along home with  
you."

"Now, Sal, I love you and can't help it,  
and if you don't let me stay and court you,  
my daddy will sue you for that cat you  
sold him yother day. By jingo he said he'd  
do it."

"Well, look here Jake—if you want to  
court me you'd better do it as a white man  
and not as a colored man. Set off there as if  
you thought I was pisen."

"How on air is that, Sal?"

"Why, sit right up here and hug and kiss  
me as if you really had some bone and sin-  
ner in you. Do you s'pose a woman  
is an intelligent answer, more than I thought  
made for practical results, as Coosuth says—  
to hug and kiss and s'ch like."

"Well," said Jake, drawing a long breath,  
"I must kiss you, for I do love Sal—"

and so Jake commenced sliding up to  
like a maple pouter going to battle. Laying  
his arm gently upon Sal's shoulder, we tho't  
we had Sal say—

"That's the way to do it, old hoss—that's  
a-kin to a white man's order."

"Oh, Jerusalem and panacas!" exclaimed  
Jake; "if this ain't better than any appli-  
cense, backwash cake, darn jacks, and 'lasses  
ain't no use. Here, here, here, here, here,  
I love you. Here their lips came together,  
and the report that followed was like pulling  
a horse's foot out of the mire. We left.

PLEASANT ARGUMENTS.—Tom B.—is a  
listless, vagabond sort of fellow, who hangs  
about the stores in our village, and lives by  
his wits, which, be it said, do not bring him  
in any stupendous gains, nor, in fact, enough  
to insure him always three meals per diem.

Here is an argument which won him a  
good dinner, once upon a time, and which,  
for its ingenuity, deserves obituary notice.

One noon, a number of the villagers were  
seated in front of the hotel door, and under  
the shade trees, when Tom made his appear-  
ance, looking lazy and hungry. Mr.—  
happened to hold a twenty-five cent stamp in  
his hand at the time, and as soon as Tom's  
eyes rested upon it, he said:

"Mr.—, let me have that for a moment,  
and I will show you something worth see-  
ing."

"Innocently enough, the currency was  
handed him, which he immediately pocketed  
after which unsatisfactory exploit he went  
off in his usual slouching gait toward the hotel  
refectory, undoubtedly intending to pur-  
chase with the newly acquired fortune a sur-  
gical dinner.

The following dialogue then ensued:

"Where are you going, Tom?"

"Going to dinner, I reckon."

"I think you'd better see before you go."

"Let me see, it was you who gave it to me,  
wasn't it?" asked Tom, inquiringly.

"Of course it was," replied Mr.—.

"Then, if you gave it to me, I shan't give  
it back."

"No, I only lent it to you."

"Then," replied Tom, with a grin, "I'll  
repay you when I'm able, and he went to  
dinner."

The argument was unanswerable.

A COURT SCENE.—William, look here;  
tell us, William, who made you. Do you  
know? William, who was considered a fool,  
screwed up his face, and looked thoughtful,  
and somewhat bewildered, slowly answered,  
"Moses, I s'pose."

"That will do," said Counsellor Gray, ad-  
dressing the court. The witness says he  
saw Moses made him. That certainly  
is an intelligent answer, more than I thought  
him capable of giving, for it shows that he  
has some faint idea of Scripture, but I sub-  
mit that it is not sufficient to entitle him to  
be sworn in as a witness capable of giving  
evidence."

"Mr. Judge," said the fool, "may I act the  
lawyer's question?"

"Certainly," said the Judge.

"Well, then, Mr. Lawyer, who d'you s'pose  
made you a witness?"

"Ah, then, I s'pose," said counsellor Gray,  
imitating the witness.

After the mirth somewhat subsided, the  
witness drew out.

"Well now, we do read in the good book  
that Aaron once made a calf, but wh'd  
thought the darned creature had got in here?"  
The Judge ordered the man to be sworn.

JOHN ADAMS.—Mr. Webster visited Mr.  
Adams a short time before his death, and  
found him reclining on a sofa, evidently in  
feeble health. He remarked to Mr. Adams:  
"I am glad to see you, sir, and I hope you  
are getting along pretty well."

Mr. A., replied in the following figurative  
language:

"Ah, sir, quite the contrary. I find I am  
a poor tenant, occupying a house much shat-  
tered by time. It sways and trembles with  
every wind, and what is worse, sir, the land-  
lord, as near as I can find out, don't intend  
to make any repairs."

"What a fine head your boy has,"  
said an admiring friend. "Yes," said the  
fond father; "he is a chip of the old block;  
nint you sonny?" "I guess so, daddie,"  
answered the boy yesterday "I was a young block-  
head!"

"Always give a narrow-minded man a  
wide berth."

## ONE SUMMER DAY.

BY SYBIL PARK.

We had found a pleasant foot path,  
Leading out into the wood,  
Where the oaks like mighty warriors  
In their giant beauty stood;

Where the patches of warm sunlight  
Shimmered down in waves of gold,  
Lighting up the lonely forest,  
Like a picture quaint and old.

And so we went, and I was glad  
Of that foot-path beneath the trees,  
While the summer-winds were singing  
"Mid the restless abiding leaves—"

Still it seemed to us the music  
Floating through the woodland dim,  
Must have caught the holy sweetness  
Of some grand cathedral hymn.

I can see the brilliant splendor  
Of that glowing summer-day,  
As it comes in rifts of beauty  
Where the dreamy shadows lay,

I can hear the music drifting  
Very softly 'mid the trees,  
But my heart is being seared  
By the bright, bright flames these.

I remember that you gathered  
Oaken leaves and blossoms rare,  
And we wove a wreath between us,  
Which you placed upon my hair,

Saying words whose earnest meaning  
I had never caught before—  
"May I love you fondly, darling;  
May I love you evermore?"

## THE TWO COWARDS.

"I was a coward! We were both cowards!"

So spoke our law tutor, Moses Drake, and  
thus he continued:

We had graduated from Harvard, Luban  
and myself—and had commenced the prac-  
tice of law. We were neither of us married,  
though we were anticipating that event. We  
had a case in court—a case of trespass—  
and I answered. The two sides laughed at  
the defendant. It was a weak and foolish com-  
plaint, and Adams should not have taken it  
up. It was merely a case of extortion. The  
plaintiff held a rod over the back of the de-  
fendant in the shape of a bit of knowledge  
concerning a private misstep of a former  
time, and the present complaint was only a  
seemingly legal way in which that other  
power was to be used for the purpose of  
forcing a poor man's purse.

I exposed the trick, and obtained the ruling  
out of the court of a scandal which Adams  
had planned to introduce as testimony. Of  
course I was severe, and as my opponent had  
acted upon a very bad case, my strictures  
cut home. I gained the verdict for my client,  
and people laughed at the foiled plain-  
tiff, and spoke lightly of his lawyer.

Thus it commenced. Adams could not  
stand the laughing, and he looked angry.  
He had had it up against me and talked  
openly about being revenged. This was on  
the first of August. A month afterwards we  
met at a party, where the gentlemen drank  
and ate in the evening, Adams and I tried  
the old trick, and Adams made a remark upon  
the third trial, whereupon a fourth person  
laughed and said I had done a great thing.  
At this Adams flushed and made an impu-  
dent reply. The reply was addressed to me  
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out of the court of a scandal which Adams  
had planned to introduce as testimony. Of  
course I was severe, and as my opponent had  
acted upon a very bad case, my strictures  
cut home. I gained the verdict for my client,  
and people laughed at the foiled plain-  
tiff, and spoke lightly of his lawyer.

Thus it commenced. Adams could not  
stand the laughing, and he looked angry.  
He had had it up against me and talked  
openly about being revenged. This was on  
the first of August. A month afterwards we  
met at a party, where the gentlemen drank  
and ate in the evening, Adams and I tried  
the old trick, and Adams made a remark upon  
the third trial, whereupon a fourth person  
laughed and said I had done