

THE COLUMBIA SPY.

SAMUEL WRIGHT, Editor and Proprietor.

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Dr. John & Rohrer, HAVING associated in the Practice of Medicine, Columbia, April 1st, 1856.

DR. G. W. MIFFLIN, DENTIST, Locust Street, a few doors above the Old Fellows' Hall, Columbia, Pa.

H. M. NORTH, ATTORNEY AND COUNSELLOR AT LAW, Columbia, Pa.

J. W. FISHER, Attorney and Counsellor at Law, Columbia, Pa.

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Poetry.

Ships at Sea. I have ships that want to see, More than fifty years ago;

None have yet come home to me, But keep sailing to and fro.

I have seen them in my sleep, Plunging through the shoreless deep, With inter'd sails and batter'd hulls,

While around them screamed the gulls, Flying low, flying low.

I have wondered why they staid From me, sailing round the world, And I've said, "In half an hour,

That their sails will never be fur'd." Great the measures that they hold, Silks, and plumes, and bars of gold,

While the spears that they bear Fill with fragrance all the air, As they sail, as they sail.

Every sailor in the port Knows that I have ships at sea; Of the waves and winds the sport,

And the sailors pray to me. Oft they come and visit me walk, Cheering me with hopeful talk,

"Till I turn heart-sick away. But the pilots when they land, Stop and take me by the hand, Saying, "you will live to see

Your proud vessels come from sea, One and all, one and all."

So I never quite despair, Nor let hope or courage fail; And some day, when skies are fair,

By the bay my ships will sail. I can buy them all I need, From the look at books to read, Hoses, axes, and works of art,

Everything except a heart. That is lost, that is lost.

Once, when I was pure and young, Power, too, than I am now, Ere a whole crew of me flung,

Or a wrinkle creased my brow. There was one whose heart was mine, But she's something more divine, And I thought come my ships from sea,

They can bring no heart to me, Ev'ning, ev'ning. (Harper's Weekly.)

Selections.

The Murderer. A little more than fifty years ago, a man by the name of Henry Thompson called at the house of Mr. J. Smith, a resident in a retired part of England, and requested a night's lodging. This request was granted, and the stranger, having taken some refreshments, retired early to bed, requesting that he might be awakened at an early hour the following morning.

When the servant appointed to call him opened the room for that purpose, he was found in his bed perfectly dead.

On examining his body, no marks of violence appeared, but his countenance looked extremely natural. The story of his death soon spread among the neighbors, and inquiries were made as to who he was and by what means he came to his death.

Nothing certain, however, was known. He had arrived on horseback, and was seen passing through a neighboring village about an hour before he reached the house where he had come to his end. And then, as to the manner of his death, so little could be discovered, that the jury returned a verdict that he died by a visitation from God.

When this was done the stranger was buried.

Days and weeks passed on, and little further was known. The public mind, however, was not at rest. Suspicions existed that foul means had hastened the stranger's death. Whispers to that effect were expressed, and in the hearts of many, Smith was considered the guilty man.

The former character of Smith had not been good. He had lived a loose and irregular life, involved himself in debt by his extravagance, and at length, being suspected of having obtained money wrongfully, he suddenly fled from the town.

More than ten years, however, had now elapsed since his return, during which he had lived at his present residence, apparently in good circumstances, and with an approved character. His former life, however, was now remembered, and suspicion was fastened upon him.

At the expiration of two months, a gentleman one day stopped in the place for the purpose of making inquiries respecting the stranger who had been found dead in his bed. He supposed himself to be the brother of the man. The horse and clothes of the unfortunate man still remained, and were immediately known as having belonged to his brother. The body also, was taken up, and though considerably changed, bore a strong resemblance to him.

He now felt authorized to ascertain, if possible the manner of his death. He proceeded, therefore, to investigate the circumstance as well as he was able. At length he made known to the magistrate of the district the information he had collected, and upon the strength of this, Smith was taken to jail to be tried for the wilful murder of Henry Thompson.

The celebrated Lord Mansfield was then on the bench. He charged the grand jury to be cautious as to finding a bill against the prisoner. The evidence of his guilt, if guilty, might be small. More information might be obtained. Should he be acquitted he could not be molested again, whatever testimony should rise up against him. The grand jury, however, did find a bill, but by a majority of only one.

At length the time of trial arrived. Smith was brought into court and placed at the bar. A great crowd thronged the room, eager and anxious to see the prisoner, and hear the trial. He himself appeared firm and collected. Nothing in his manner or appearance indicated guilt; and when the question was put to him by the clerk, "Are you guilty or not guilty?" he answered with an unflinching tongue, and with a countenance perfectly unchanged, "not guilty."

The counsel for the prosecution now opened the case. But it was apparent that he had little expectation of being able to prove the prisoner guilty. He stated to the jury that the case was involved in great mystery. The prisoner was a man of respectability and of property. The deceased was supposed to have had about him gold and jewels to a large amount; but the prisoner was not so much in want of funds as to be under a strong temptation to commit murder. And, besides, if the prisoner had obtained the property, he had effectually concealed it. Not a trace of it was to be found.

Why, then was the prisoner suspected?—The deceased, Henry Thompson, was a jeweller, residing in London, and a man of wealth. He had left London for the purpose of meeting a trader at Hull of whom he expected to make a large purchase. The trader he did meet; and after the departure of the latter, Mr. Thompson was known to have in his possession jewels and gold to a large amount.

With these in his possession, he left Hull on his return to London. It was not known that he stopped until he reached Smith's, and the next morning he was discovered dead in his bed. He died, then, in Smith's house, and if it could be shown that he came to his death in an unnatural way, it would increase the suspicion that the prisoner was in some way connected with the murder.

Now, then, continued the counsel, it will be proved beyond the possibility of a doubt that the deceased died by poison. What was that poison? It was a recent discovery of some German chemists, said to be produced by distilling the seed of the wild cherry tree. It was a poison more powerful than any other known, and deprived of life so immediately as to leave no marks of suffering and no contortion of the features.

But then, the question, when and by whom was it administered? One circumstance, a small one indeed, and yet upon it might hang a horrid tale, was that the stopper of a small bottle of a very singular description had been found in the prisoner's house. The stopper had been examined, and said by medical men to have belonged to a German vial, containing the kind of poison he had described. But, then, was that poison administered by Smith, or at his instigation? Who were the prisoner's family? It consisted only of himself, a house-keeper and one man servant. The man-servant slept in an out-house adjoining the stable, and did so on the night of Thompson's death. The prisoner slept in one end of the house, the house-keeper at the other, and the deceased had been put in a room adjoining the house-keeper's.

It could be proved, that about three hours after midnight, on the night of Thompson's death, a light had been seen moving about the house, and that a figure holding the light was seen to go from the room in which the prisoner slept to the house-keeper's room; the light now disappeared for a minute when two persons were seen, but whether they went into Thompson's room the witness could not swear; but shortly after they were observed to pass quite through the entry to Smith's room, into which they entered, and in about five minutes the light was extinguished.

The witness would further state that after the person had returned with the light into Smith's room, and before it was extinguished he had twice perceived some dark object to intervene between the light and the window itself, and which he described by saying it appeared as if a door had been placed before the light. Now, in Smith's room, there was nothing that could account for this appearance, and there was neither cupboard nor press in the room, which, but for the bed, was entirely empty; the room in which he dressed being a distance beyond it.

The counsel for the prosecution here concluded what he had to say. During his address, Smith in no wise appeared to be agitated or distressed—and equally unmoved while the witness testified in substance what the opening speech of the counsel led the court and jury to expect.

Lord Mansfield now addressed the jury. He said that in his opinion the evidence was not sufficient to condemn the prisoner, and if the jury agreed with him in opinion he would discharge him. Without leaving their seats the jury agreed that the evidence was not sufficient.

At this moment, when they were about to render a verdict of acquittal, the prisoner rose and addressed the court. He said he had been accused of a foul crime, and the jury had said there was not sufficient evidence against him. Was he to go out of court with suspicions resting upon him, after all? This he was unwilling to do. He was an innocent man, and if the Judge would grant him an opportunity, he would prove testimony should rise up against him. He would confirm a statement which he would now make.

The house-keeper had not appeared in court. She had concealed herself or been concealed by Smith. This was considered a dark sign against him, but he himself now offered to bring her forward, and stated as a reason, not that he was not willing that she should testify, but, knowing the excitement, he was fearful that she would be bribed to give testimony contrary to fact.—But he was now ready to relate all the circumstances he knew; she might be called and examined. If her testimony does not confirm my story, let me be condemned.

The request of the prisoner appeared reasonable, and Lord Mansfield, contrary to his usual practice granted it.

The prisoner went on with his statement. He said he wished to go out of the court, relieved from the suspicions which were resting upon him. As to the poison, by means of which the stranger was said to have died, he knew neither the name of it, nor even the existence of it, until made known by the counsel. He could call God to witness the truth of what he said.

And then, as to Mr. Thompson, he was a perfect stranger to him. How should he know what articles of value he had? He did not know. If he had such articles at Hull he might have left them on the road, or which was more probable, have otherwise disposed of them. And if he died, by means of the fatal drug, he must have administered it himself.

He begged the jury to remember that his premises had been repeatedly and minutely searched, and not the most trifling article that belonged to the deceased had been discovered in his possession. The stopper of a vial had been found—but of this he could only say, he had no knowledge, and had not seen it before it was produced in court.

One fact had been proved, and only one. That he would explain, and his house-keeper would confirm the statement. A witness had testified that some one had gone to the bed room of the house-keeper on the night in question. He was ready to admit that it was himself. He had been subject for much of his life to sudden fits of illness; he had been seized with one on that occasion, and had gone to procure her assistance in lighting a fire. She had returned with him to his room for that purpose, he having waited for a minute in the passage, while she put on her clothes. This would account for the momentary disappearance of the light. After remaining a few minutes in his room, and finding himself better, he had dismissed her and retired to bed, from which he had not risen when he was informed of the death of his guest.

Such was the prisoner's address, which produced a powerful effect. It was delivered in a firm and impressive manner, and from the simple and artless manner of the man, perhaps not one present doubted his entire innocence.

The house-keeper was now introduced and examined by the counsel of the prisoner.—She had not heard any part of the statement of Smith, nor a single word of the trial.—Her story confirmed all he had said.

To this succeeded cross-examination by the counsel for the prosecution. One circumstance had made a deep impression on his mind—that was, that while the prisoner and the house-keeper were in the room of the former, something like a door obstructed the light of the candle, so that the witness testified to the fact, but could not see it.—What was this obstruction? There was no door—nothing in the room—which could account for this. But the witness was positive that something like a door did for a moment come between the window and the candle. This needed explanation. The house-keeper was the person that could give it. Designing to probe this matter in the end to the bottom, but not wishing to excite her alarm, he began by asking her a few unimportant questions, and among others, where the candle stood when she was in Mr. Smith's room?

"In the centre of the room," she replied. "Well, was the closet, or cupboard, or whatever you call it, opened once or twice while it stood there?"

She made no reply. "I will help your recollection," said the counsel; "after Mr. Smith had taken the medicine out of the closet, did he shut the door, or did it remain open?"

"He shut it."

"And when he replaced the bottle in the closet, he opened it again, did he?"

"I did."

"And how long was it open the last time?"

"About a minute."

"Well, and when open, would the door be exactly between the light and the window?"

"It would."

"I forget," said the counsel, "whether you said the closet was on the right or on the left hand side of the window?"

"On the left hand side."

"Would the door of the closet make any noise in opening?"

"None."

"Are you certain?"

"I am."

"Have you ever opened it yourself or only seen Mr. Smith open it?"

"I never opened it myself."

"Did you ever keep the key?"

"Never."

"Who did?"

"Mr. Smith, always."

At that moment the house-keeper chanced to cast her eyes towards Mr. Smith, the prisoner. A cold, damp sweat stood upon his

brow, and his face had lost all its color; he appeared a living image of death. The consequence of her answer flashed across her mind. She had been so thoroughly deceived by the manner of the advocate, and the little importance he seemed to attach to her statements, that she had been led on, by one question to another, till she had told him all he wanted to know.

She was obliged to be taken from the court, and a physician who was present was requested to attend her. At this time the solicitor for the prosecution (answering to our State's Attorney) left the court, but no one knew for what purpose. Presently the physician came into court and stated that it would be impossible for the house-keeper to resume her seat in the box short of an hour or two.

It was almost twelve in the day. Lord Mansfield, having directed that the jury be accommodated with a room, where they could be kept by themselves, adjourned the court two hours. The prisoner, in the meantime was remanded to jail.

It was between four and five o'clock, when the judge resumed his seat upon the bench. The prisoner was again placed at the bar, and the house-keeper brought in and led to the box. The court room was crowded to excess, and an awful silence pervaded the place.

The cross-examining counsel again addressed the house-keeper. "I have but a few more questions to ask you," said he, "heed how you answer, for your life hangs upon a thread."

"Do you know this stopper?"

"I do."

"To whom does it belong?"

"To Mr. Smith."

"When did you last see it?"

At that moment the solicitor entered the court, bringing with him upon a tray, a watch, two money bags, a jewel case, and a bottle of the same manufacture of the stopper, and having a cork in it. The tray was placed in sight of the prisoner and the witness, and from that moment no doubt remained in the mind of any man present of the guilt of the prisoner.

A few words will bring this melancholy tale to a close. The house where the murder had been committed, was between the end of the street and the house-keeper's.

The cross-examination of the house-keeper had discovered the existence of the closet, and its situation, had set off on horseback, with two Sheriff's officers, and after putting down a part of the wall, had detected the important concealment. The search was very rewarded. The whole of the property belonging to Mr. Thompson was found there, amounting in value to some thousand pounds; and to leave no room for doubt, a bottle was discovered which the medical men instantly pronounced to contain the very identical poison which caused the death of the unfortunate Thompson. The result was too obvious to need explanation.

It scarcely need be added that Smith was convicted and executed, and brought to his awful punishment by his own means. Had he said nothing—had he not persisted in calling a witness to prove his innocence, he might have escaped. But God had evidently led him to work out his own ruin, as a just reward of his awful crime.

Taking Charge of a Lady. The steamer Ben Franklin—it was many years ago, reader—was just on the point of leaving her dock at Providence, when a slender, pale young man with sandy whiskers and green eyes, who had just safely stowed away his valise, honorably paid his fare, and purchased a supper ticket, and now stood upon the deck leaning upon his blue cotton umbrella in a mild attitude of contemplation, was accosted by a benevolent-looking gentleman in gold bowled spectacles, upon whose arm hung a feminine in a bright blue mazarine, broadcloth traveling habit, with a gold watch in her waist, and a green veil over her face, with the (to the timid young man) startling question of—

"Pray, sir, will you be so kind as to take charge of a lady?"

The slender young man with the blue cotton umbrella blushed up to the roots of his sandy hair, but he bowed deeply and affirmatively.

"We were disappointed in not meeting a friend, sir," continued the benevolent-looking old gentleman, "and so I had to trust to chance to find an escort for Fanny. Only as far as New-York, sir; my daughter will give you very little trouble. She's a strong-minded, independent woman, and abundantly able to take care of herself, but I don't like the idea of ladies traveling alone. If the boat sinks, sir, she's abundantly able to swim ashore. Good-bye, Fanny."

"Father," said the lady in the blue habit, in a deep and mellow baritone—rather a queer voice for a woman—"a parting salute!" She threw back her veil, displaying a pair of piercing black eyes, kissed the paternal cheek, veiled the black eyes a moment with a lace-bordered handkerchief, as her sire descended the gang plank—his exit being deprived of dignity by the sudden withdrawal of the board, and then placed her arm within that of the sandy haired young gentleman and began walking him up and down the promenade deck.

"Isn't this delightful!" said she. "O, what can exceed the pleasure of traveling when one has a sympathetic friend and companion!" and she rather pressed the arm of her strong-minded.

man as he hung over the scene from one of the boat stakes.

"Captain Brown!" suggested the furious man, with smothered rage.

"Well, then, Captain Brown," said Brown 2d, spitefully, "the lady you allude to is a total stranger to me. She was put under my care by a benevolent looking old gentleman, with gold bowled spectacles, and she has already cost me ten dollars, money advanced on her account."

"All persons are forbidden to trust the same, as I will pay no debts of her contracting," said the furious man, with gleams of unmitigated ferocity and savage exultation.

"Then I'm done brown, that's all," said the young man, gloomily. "As for Mrs. Fanny Sophonisba Brown, I never want to see her face again. She is at the American Hotel, and you can recover her by proving property and paying charges. And, for my part, I hope I may be kicked to death by grasshoppers, if ever I take charge of a lady again."

This was the largest speech, probably, that the sandy haired young man had ever made in his life. It was a regular "stunner" though. It convinced Miss Sumker, who had for a moment thought of withdrawing the light of her freckles from him forever, and who now hastened to replace her arm in his, and it convinced Captain Brown, who became suddenly as mild as moonbeams, shook his new acquaintance by the hand and declared him to be a "fine fellow."

But the drayman was disgusted at the affair ending, without a fight, and expressed his feelings, as he laid the lash across his horse, by the single exclamation, "Pickles!" thereby intimating that the nauseous sweetness of the reconciliation required a strong dash of acidity to neutralize its flavor.

The Captain regained his strong-minded wife, and our sandy haired friend went home with Miss Sumker, metamorphosed into Mrs. Brown, having "taken charge" of her for good.

An Ignorant Constable. An "interior" paper is following up a Justice of the Peace in its vicinity with a great deal of pertinacity. Whenever anything unusual occurs in his Court, the editor reports it at full length. The other day a jury trial was to take place before him, and eleven jurors had been empaneled, when the constable of the Court pushed forward the twelfth, a long-legged, slab-sided specimen of humanity, who was addressed by his Honor with all the familiarity of an old acquaintance.

"Get up thar, Aleck, and let's conclude this case."

Aleck hesitated and looked steadily at the Justice.

"Come, come!" continued the latter, impatiently. "It's no use; you can't get off; I don't go on no excuses. So up with you, Aleck, seeing it's w'ile little use to talk, hang his head a little de step towards the vacant seat among the jury, muttering as he moved, 'The Court might let a feller play his hand out, any how!'

"The Court might do what?" shouted the Justice, fiercely.

"Why, all I have to say is," promptly returned Aleck, "that it's rather hard to make a feller lay his hand down to set on a jury." Then, as a clincher, he inquired, with a great deal of feeling, "How would your Honor like it?"

The Justice looked serious. Calling the constable to him, and asking a few questions in a low tone, he addressed himself directly to Aleck.

"Aleck, I bet disker that when the constable served the summons 'pon you, thar was a snug little game of 'draw' going on in Beck's tavern."

"A tip-top game, your Honor," said Aleck, brightening up; "had as good a said as I want to."

"What did you have, Aleck," continued the Justice, "when you laid your hand down to serve on the jury?"

"A beautiful 'full' your Honor."

The Justice became deeply interested.—Wiping the perspiration from his face, and looking Aleck in the face, he continued:

"Does this here Court understand you to say that the constable took you away from a good 'full' to set on a jury?"

Aleck bowed in the affirmative.

"And you told the constable what you bolt?"

"I did, your Honor."

And he jerked you away from the table, and left nobody to bet on your hand?"

Again Aleck answered in the affirmative.

The Court took a long breath, and then resumed its questions under greater excitement than ever.

"Aleck, did you deal them keards that round?"

Aleck looked up inquiringly, and replied that he did.

The Justice drew back, entirely overcome with the strength of Aleck's excuse.

"Mr. Constable," said he, elevating himself high in the chair, "this ere Court is half a mind to find you for contempt. By bringing this man here, you have perhaps broke up a snug little game of 'draw' and spoiled a first-rate 'full' when he had the dealing of the keards round the table! It's the most 'exasperating' case I ever seed.—Thon rising to his feet with a dignified air, he shouted, 'Aleck, you've exasperated the constable, give me another juror!'

Aleck vanished to continue his snug little game of 'draw' while another was ushered into the juror's seat without even a hearing.

"Go it, lommee!" shouted a listening dray-