

A BORDER OUTRAGE

BY ROBERT MORRIS, E. T.

In the early settlements made below Vicksburg, Miss., there was a miserable want of law and morals. Might became right, and weak honest justice stood by a poor chance to be felt or even heard.

Amongst the ungodly reprobates that infested the land, living by no honest labor and to no useful end, was one Eugene Damon, a gambler by profession, a bully by practice, the terror of the more peaceable portion of the citizens. Damon was a married man, and, what is strange, his wife was as much of the rowdy as he was, travelling with him in all his excursions, assisting him in time of need by counsel; and, unless common report scandalized her, leading a strong hand occasionally, when a strong hand was needed.

For several years this couple resided near a small town I will call Wilder, a place now deserted, wrecked in the banking hurricane of 1837.

There they occupied a neat one-story dwelling of their own, and when not absent upon professional excursions there they kept open house to all who had as against every man, as their was.

This class of beings cannot be said, in the long run, to enjoy much happiness, but they make up the deprivation by enjoying themselves very fast, when they get it. This accounted for the uproarious agog and shouting that accompanied their visits to Damon's house, and for the fretful aspect of their eyes, and the peckberry rattle of their noses, observable on days subsequent.

Nobody ever fought there, however, for the proprietor always commenced his visits with the avowal that he had a chapter to sustain, and made every one his guest surrender knife and pistol in his keeping until the end of the spree.

Thus, while every public meeting Wilder produced its fisticuffing, shouting, and stabbing, there never was a difficulty of the sort at Damon's, thus corroborating Milton's "Devils with devils do not hold concord; men only disagree." I question whether Milton was ever more accurately quoted in his life.

In the town of Wilder traded the scanty firm of Falmestock, Beverly & Co. produce and commission merchants. It was a substantial firm; for while all other firms smashed without assets of any kind, this establishment paid fifteen cents on the dollar, and so on, while this was considered at the time, that it was property in New York represented them with assets of plate. The house had just received remittance of funds on account of a collection, to the very handsome amount of four thousand dollars. It was duly locked up in the iron safe in the counting room, and the partners retired to their homes confident in its security as they were in their own solvency. But when the store was unlocked next morning, the safe, and its contents, was found to be wrenched open, and the money drawer empty, and the value of the packet abstracted.

Vainly every attempt to describe the scene. Falmestock collared Beverly, and demanded the money. Beverly called the Co. into the street, the Co. screaming fire, murder and thieves, and in a breath knew who left the store last. People crowded in from all parts, to find Falmestock in his chair, B cutting up the most extravagant pantomimes, and the Co. dissolved in the most uncontrollable anguish. It was a pitiful sight, that affair was. The danger of a man's falling from grace never excited half so much distress in the hearts of the actors as the loss of that money.

Amongst the lookers on, and by far the least concerned of any, appeared Eugene Damon, who examined the pick-lock with a shrewd smile, and so clasped it in his opinion, "That it was a juicy thing; I language that certainly meant something, although none of the bystanders understood what! Great rewards were forthwith offered to induce the thief to be honest. The temptations held out went as far as to propose to give five hundred dollars, and no questions asked if the money were returned. But as this involved the loss of three thousand five hundred dollars cash in hand already, honesty remained at a discount, and the purloiners generously permitted the sufferers to ask as many questions as they pleased. Falmestock, Beverly & Co. never heard of their money afterwards.

The ambiguous language used by Damon had excited various suspicions which his free manner of living, and the fluster of his money market shortly afterwards added considerable weight. Shrewd as an individual could not be, he shrewdly glanced and muttered remarks elicited by his passing down the street, each day, that something was brewing; but like a man who has smelt rattlesnakes before, he only held his head the higher, and walked by. His wife, to whom he imparted these suspicions, counseled him to prepare his weapons, but laughing at her fears, he continued his daily walks, with no other defence than the usual tools of a gambler, viz: a bowie and two brace of double barrel.

He had speedy cause to regret his carelessness, however, for while drinking at the coffee house one evening about dusk, he was suddenly seized from behind, blindfolded, and conveyed to a skiff, in the river, in which he was hurriedly rowed across to the opposite side before he could form the shadow of an idea what fate was contemplated for him.

Carrying him up the bank, his captors, four in all, led him half a mile back to the pea, tied him to a hollow tree, and opened the object of their lawless act.

One of them, easily recognized by his voice, to be Dr. Veneer in spite of his mask, told him that he must tell them what he had done with the money, or they would whip him to death. This short but comprehensive declaration was followed up by a display of their whips, four horrid instruments, triply

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aged, and strong enough to wear warts; the hips of an alligator. The gambler had been in a session from which fear is banished. He had led him too often within the ring shot of pistols and the cut of his whip away, and he d-d; but if you kill me I'll kill all four of you.

is not my purpose to detail the horrors; the trial of endurance on one part, of strength on the other; suffice it to say that the hardened ruffian was more than a match for the whole of them, and that although their thick whips were clotted with blood, and their arms weary with the exertion, his indomitable spirit defied them to the last. As he fell into a faint, they sat down, those four apprentice lynchers, to cinch with each other.

It was past midnight. The sultry air of the river bottoms, occasionally heated by one of those breaths that so inexplicably meet to travel in a summer night, gave evidence of a coming storm. The bite of the mosquitoes that choked the very air in clouds, were distressing beyond all endurance, and as the hot naked body of their prisoner hung backward in its faintness, the stripes of bloody skin, torn loose by their whips, were quite hidden by their black, eager forms. What should they do? The suggestion of Dr. Veneer cannot be entertained for a moment; the reader may readily guess what it was. Finally it was decided that Damon should remain hanging there until morning and the party would return.

To remain there among the mosquitoes! Far more kind to have adopted the shorter plan of the Doctor's, and let the black mould of the cane break cover its dead. But thunder clouds were banking up on every side, and the regulators hurried to the river to get across in time, barely in time, to escape the storm.

Amidst the crushing of the trees and the howling of the blast, the unpitied gambler returned to his senses. He had been the deep of death, but for those very slings that aroused the life within him to a faint yet, on last Saturday night, about 10 o'clock, before any person had the least intimation that any misfortune had befallen Mr. Lawrence, the company requested the brother to mesmerize his sister, as many of them were anxious to see the effect of mesmerism.

The lady was placed in a mesmeric sleep, and on the request of several persons present, that he would propound to her a few questions, he asked her, "what do you see, sister?" She immediately replied, "I see three men engaged in a fight on the levee." "Do you know any of them?" "Yes; one of them is Mr. Lawrence; the others I don't know; one is a very tall man, the other about medium size; and these two men are striking Mr. Lawrence. Why don't somebody help him? Why don't he shoot them? There, now they have knocked Mr. Lawrence down. Good heavens! they have killed him." "What are they doing now?" "The tall man is taking his watch, and the other is feeling in his pocket. He is taking some bank bills out of Mr. Lawrence's pocket; now he is taking some gold. They are talking together now; now they pick Mr. Lawrence up and carry him towards the river. Will nobody save him! There they have thrown him in. Mr. Lawrence is gone." She stopped talking for a minute or so, when she was again asked, "what do you see?" "I see a steam ship lying at the wharf. It is about to leave. There is a great number of passengers on board; and among the passengers I see the two men who killed Mr. Lawrence and threw him in the river. The tall one has his watch; they are both better dressed than they were before."

Here the company having become satisfied with the experiment, the brother woke his sister; and when she was informed of what she had said; she laughed incredulously, remarking she recollected nothing of what had taken place. The sister of Mr. Lawrence was present, and the company were pretty free in passing their jokes about the matter; and all were vociferous in their denunciations of mesmerism as a humbug. Little did they think that the horrid scene just described, was actually at that moment perhaps being enacted, that Mr. Lawrence was then no more. It is also a remarkable fact that two steam ships sailed for California from the wharf on Sunday morning. Mr. Lawrence was not seen after leaving his office, with five or six hundred dollars in his pocket, at a late hour on Saturday. No anxiety was manifested by his friends until Monday morning; when, beginning to be alarmed, they instituted search for him. His hat and some other articles, with blood upon them, were found on the levee in the Fourth District. All then remembered the story of the mesmeric subject; and mesmerism had more than one convert in that company.

A LUCKY EDITOR.—Hon. John Wentworth, editor of the Chicago Democrat, it is said, has just sold a lot in that city, 96 by 150 feet, for \$30,000; making according to the Dem. Press, about \$100,000 worth of property he has sold within a year, and he has more than as much still on hand.

But the avenger was in their path. A state's warrant was sworn out against the four for assault and battery on the person of Eugene Damon. Confronted with their accuser in the magistrate's court, they were identified by his plain, direct testimony, as well as by various circumstances, and put under the heaviest bail bonds to appear before the next Circuit Court.

But the bar before which they were to stand, and the Judge with whom they were to be confronted, were of a far higher character than those. For, as they sat in the presence of their friends, two of them having their wives and children present—as they sat depressed in mind by the turn the affair was taking, Damon walked deliberately up to them, drew two double-barreled pistols from his pockets, and with right and left hands, shot the four through the heart before a gesture or even a word could be interposed!

Vengeance was never more sudden or complete. The four young men, all in the prime of life, the crowd of horror-stricken friends, the fury of the citizens, the dismay of the officers, must be conceived rather than described. Damon was borne to jail, placed in due time upon trial, and acquitted on the score of justification!

A SINGULAR STORY. A Mr. Lawrence, of New Orleans, has lately been missing, and no traces could be found of him, although the opinion is, that he was murdered and thrown into the river. The New Orleans Delta, of the 17th ult., contains the following singular narrative, and says it comes from a highly responsible source, and that the veracity of the gentleman from whom they received the story is unquestionable. Says the Delta:

"The wife of one of Mr. Lawrence's most intimate friends, who had for a number of years been of the closest terms of friendship with that unfortunate man, is a mesmeric medium, and her brother is in the habit of placing her in the mesmeric state. At the house of an acquaintance, in Lafayette, on last Saturday night, about 10 o'clock, before any person had the least intimation that any misfortune had befallen Mr. Lawrence, the company requested the brother to mesmerize his sister, as many of them were anxious to see the effect of mesmerism.

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IMPORTANT TO LAND HOLDERS.

We presume that a very large portion of our land-holders are not aware of the stringency of the law relative to the Recording of the Deeds and Mortgages, &c., and the fewest number apprehend the inconvenience they may suffer by neglecting to have such papers recorded within the time required by the Act of Assembly. They must be recorded within six months from the date of their execution, or, as the law says in so many words, they shall be adjudged fraudulent and void against a subsequent purchaser or mortgagee; who has complied with the provision of the law. The following is a section of the Act of the 28th of May, 1715:

Sec. 8. No deed or mortgage, or defensible deed, in the nature of a mortgage, hereafter to be made, shall be good or sufficient to convey or pass any estate therein for life or years, unless such deed be acknowledged or proved, and recorded within six months after the date thereof, where such lands lie.

The first section of the act of March 18, 1775, provides that all deeds and conveyances, shall be recorded within six months after the execution of the same, and expressly declares that "every such deed and conveyance which shall not be proved and recorded as aforesaid, shall be adjudged fraudulent and void against any subsequent purchaser or mortgagee for valuable consideration, unless such deed or conveyance be recorded as aforesaid before the proving and recording of the deed of conveyance under which such subsequent purchaser or mortgagee shall claim."

It will be seen by the foregoing that every land-holder or mortgagee should have his deeds or mortgages recorded in due time and thus secure himself against the stringent penalties imposed upon negligence.

A FLAT-FOOTED CANDIDATE.—The following is the card of a candidate for justice of the peace in Palestine, Texas:

Fellow Citizens.—With the issuing of this sheet is unfurled to the breeze, either in temper or calm, my name before you as a candidate for Chief Justice of Anderson county, at the ensuing August election. I do it from choice, not from solicitation. I do it for the office is honorable and profitable. I feel myself competent to discharge the duties of the office. I claim no superior merit over any one else who may choose to run against me. I would like to run the race solitary and alone; but if any are desirous let them pitch in—it is not deep. I stand flaccidated, square toed, hump shouldered, upon the platform of rights and true republicanism. In politics I am opposed to the Legislature—in favor of Texas and her citizens. Opposed to telegraphs, i. e. on the timescale—a right, up-and-down, all-over rail-road man; but not all of the twenty-second stripe. Finally, fellow citizens, you elect me your Chief Justice, I will make the very welkin ring with loud huzzas for the son's of Anderson county! If defeated, I will retire with dignity and perfect good humor, remembering a most beautiful little song which I sing remarkably well, called—"I'm afloat, I'm afloat, see. I hope ere long to see you face to face."

A. G. CANTLEY.

EARTHQUAKES.—Three distinct shocks of an earthquake were felt in Manchester, Clay county, Ky., on the 29th ult.—the first at six o'clock in the evening, the second at midnight, and the third at five o'clock in the morning of Monday. The first two shocks were very severe, shaking the houses at an alarming rate, and creating no little consternation among the astonished inhabitants of that region. They were felt for about twenty five miles around, and were accompanied by a noise resembling distant thunder.

A day or two ago, a Quaker and a hot-headed youth were quarreling in the street.

The broad brimmed friend kept his temper most equitable which seemed but to increase the anger of the other.

"Fellow," said the latter, "I don't know a bigger fool than you are," finishing the expression with an oath.

"Stop, friend," replied the Quaker, "forgettest thyself!"

"Well, Pat, Jim didn't quite kill you with that brickbat, did he?"

"No, but I wish he had!"

"What for?"

"So I could see him hanged, the villain!"

"The best cure for hard times, is to cheat the doctor, by being temperate; the lawyer by keeping out of debt; the demagogue by voting for honest men; and poverty by being industrious."

The new Lutheran Church in Delaware, Ohio, was struck by lightning on Monday, the 13th Feb., and its steeple almost wholly destroyed.

There are several vessels detained in the port of Boston for want of crews. Wages of \$20 a month are paid.

The qualities of your friends will be those of your enemies; cold friends, cold enemies; fervid enemies, warm friends.

The liberty of the press—having your pockets picked in a crowd.

THE GAMBSTER.

At Turnbridge, in the year 1715, a gentleman whose name was Hedges, made a very brilliant appearance; he had been married about two years to a young lady of great beauty and large fortune; they had one child, a boy, on whom they bestowed all that affection which they could spare from each other. He knew nothing of gaming, nor seemed to have the least passion for play; but he was unacquainted with his own heart; he began by doing to bet at the tables for trifling sums, and his soul took fire at the prospect of immediate gain; he was soon surrounded with sharpers, who with calmness lay in ambush for his fortune, and coolly took advantage of the precipitancy of his passion.

His lady perceived the ruin of her family approaching, but at first, without being alterably; it was determined, therefore, to let him pursue his fortune, but previously take measures to prevent the pursuits being fatal.

Accordingly, every night the gentleman was a constant attendant at the hazard tables; he understood neither the arts of sharpers, nor even the allowed strokes of a connoisseur, yet still he played. The consequence is obvious; he lost his estate, his equipage, his wife's jewels, and every other moveable that could be parted with, except a repeating watch. His agony upon this occasion was inexpressible; he was even mean enough to ask a gentleman who sat near, to lend him a few pence, in order to turn his fortune; but this prudent gambster who plainly saw there was no expectation of being repaid, refused to lend a farthing, alleging a former resolution against lending. Hedges was at last tormented with the continuance of ill success; and pulling out his watch, asked if any person in the company, would set him sixty guineas upon it—the company were silent. He then demanded fifty—still no answer. He sunk to forty, thirty, twenty—finding the company still without an answer, he dashed it against the floor, at the same time, attempting to dash out his brains against the marble chimney-piece.

The last act of desperation immediately excited the attention of the whole company; they instantly gathered round and prevented the effects of his passion; and when he again became cool, he was permitted to return home, with sullen discontent to his wife. Upon his entering her apartment, she received him with her usual tenderness and satisfaction; while he answered her caresses with contempt and sternness; his disposition being quite altered with his misfortunes. "But, my dear Jenny," said his wife, "perhaps you don't know the news I have to tell; mamma's old uncle is dead, the messenger is now in the house, and you know his estate is settled upon you. This account seemed only to increase his agony; and looking angry at her, cried, "There you may see, my dear, his estate is not settled upon me." "I beg your pardon, says she, I really thought it was, at least you have always told me so." "No," returned he, "as sure and you and I are to be miserable here and our children beggars hereafter, I have sold the reversion of it this day, and have lost every farthing I got for it at the hazard table." "What, all?" replied the lady, "Yes, every farthing," returned he, "and I owe a thousand pounds more to you, I have to pay."

When the lady had a little enjoyed his perplexity, "No, my dear," cried she, "you have lost but a trifle, and you owe no thing; your brother and I have taken care to prevent the effects of your rashness, and are actually the persons who have won your fortune; we employed proper persons for this purpose, who brought their winnings to me; your money, your equipage, are in my possession, and I here return them to you, from whom they were unjustly taken; I only ask permission to keep my jewels, and to keep you, my greatest jewel from such dangers for the future." Her prudence had the proper effect, he ever after retained a sense of his former follies, and never played for the smallest sums, and for amusement.

The Fredericksburg News says: In the county in which we was raised, for twenty generations back, a certain family of wealth and respectability have intermarried, until there can not be found in three of them a sound man or woman. One has sore eyes, another scrofula, a third is idiotic, a fourth is blind, a fifth is lame, a sixth with a head about the size of a turnip, with not one out of the number exempt from physical or mental defects of some kind. Yet this family perseveres to intermarry with each other, with these living monuments constantly before them.

A lawyer, (said Lord Brougham, in a facetious mood, (is a learned gentleman who rescues your estate from your enemies and keeps it safe.)"

The Portland Advertiser says: it is a supposition generally conceded to be true, that the cords of wood given to the poor are recorded at once.

GOING WEST.

A correspondent asks the interesting queries, which we send the editor's answer:

1. Which is the best time for going West, the spring or autumn?

2. What part of the West is best to emigrate to, taking into consideration the healthfulness of the climate?

3. Does the Fever and Ague prevail much in Wisconsin?

4. How long does the Preemption of a half held good?

5. I have seen it stated that a part of the north western quarter of Ohio was yet in the Government, and for sale at the Government price of \$1 25 per acre, and that it was excellent land. Is it so?

Many want to go West, but for want of reliable information do not attempt it. And I presume that many would feel obliged by a short article in your paper relating to the subject. I want to go to a healthy locality, decent land, and fair water. Our answer to this writer may serve for others also; here it is:

1. For a farmer, Spring is decidedly the best season for migration westward if he can start early; for a Mechanic, almost any season will serve. We should advise a Farmer to start as early as the first of April; but travel and transportation are then much dearer and the journeying with a family less agreeable than in June, which month we would suggest to Mechanics. The farmer of limited means who expects to work for others at first, and not get in a crop of his own this year, may also do well to wait. He will find work abundant in Haying and Harvesting almost anywhere.

2. A volume might be written in answer to this question and not exhaust it. Briefly—There are good locations everywhere, and energetic capable workers can hardly locate amiss between Buffalo and Pittsburg on the East and St. Paul to Independence (Mo.) on the West. Far more depends on the man than the place. We like Northern Indiana or Illinois and Southern Wisconsin very well, but there is very much good land yet unimproved in Michigan, Ohio, and even in Southwestern New York and Northwestern Pennsylvania. A farmer of ample means need not go even beyond the Delaware river to find land worth buying and cultivating; but he who has more children than hundreds of dollars, may wisely go far enough to have distant speculation, so that he can buy accessible land at, or near, Government price.

For good Mechanics and Artisans, we consider Wisconsin and Illinois States hard to beat. Chicago is now growing with immense strides; Milwaukee is doing well; so are a hundred places in these two States. For a good chopper, digger, driller or farmer, who wants to earn money by hiring out at good wages, we never saw a better country than that on Lake Superior; the more many might go there to glut the labor market.

3. Fever and Ague is apt to prevail in all countries when first settled by civilized people. The breaking up of the soil has a tendency to extraordinary and throws off noxious gases in extraordinary quantities. Wells are few and shallow, and thousands, in urgent need of buildings, fences, plowing, &c., drink the water obtained from sloughs or sluggish brooks, almost purified by decaying vegetation. Fevers of some sort are almost inevitable consequences. We believe Wisconsin to be more free from them than any other country as new as that; but it cannot be exempted from them. They are far more prevalent in Illinois, and indeed every other western State; even Minnesota suffers by them. We believe they are not known on Lake Superior unless carried there in the system; the pure water of the leaping, dashing brooks and bracing air of that healthful region proving an effectual antidote. But whenever their swamps and sloughs shall have been drained, their practices broken up and subdued, and their people supplied with relatively pure water from deep wells, we presume the most sickly portions of the West will be as healthy as Western New York now is. Meanwhile, a man may well decide to pay a little more for land, or take that which is less fertile, rather than subject himself and family to a seasoning of Ague.

4. A Preemption or settler's right to purchase any quarter section whereon he had located prior to its being spoken for by the Land Office by any one else, did formerly protect him for two years from the date of his entry; we believe that is still the case, though Preemption acts have generally been limited in their effective operation. We, however, most decidedly advise every pioneer to work out by the day or month and earn the money to buy his location, and have the patent in his pocket before striking a blow on the land.

5. There is a considerable portion of North Western Ohio which has never been bought of the Government, but we believe the State now claims most of this under the act of Congress surrendering swamp lands to the States which include them respectively. That land, whether owned by the Union or the State, is quite fertile, as well as heavily timbered; but Chills and fevers are rather common there, especially near the Maumee. We hardly know a State whose soil is appreciating in value more rapidly than that of Ohio. We regard her to-day with her two and a-half millions of people, as the most magnificently timbered State in the Union, and her central location, access to the great markets of Cincinnati and Pittsburg, proximity to the seaboard, and almost unequal facilities for transportation by river, lake, canals and railroads insure a most rapid increase in population, production and wealth. In 1850 her population will be about four millions, and we doubt whether more than one State will then be ahead of her.

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