The Lancaster Intelligencer,

PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY BY

H. G. SMITH & CO.

H. G. SMITH. A. J. STEINMAN

TERMS—Two Dollars per annum, payable in all cases in advance.

THE LANCASTER DAILY INTELLIGENCER is published every evening, Sunday excepted, at $5 per Annum in advance.

OFFICE—SOUTHWEST CORNER OF CENTER SQUARE.

The Lancaster Intelligencer.

VOLUME 69 LANCASTER, PA. WEDNESDAY MORNING JULY 15 1868 NUMBER 28

RATE OF ADVERTISING.

BUSINESS ADVERTISEMENTS, $12 a year per quare of ten lines; $5 per year for each additional square.

REAL ESTATE ADVERTISING, 10 cents a line for the first, and 5 cents for each subsequent insertion.

GENERAL ADVERTISING 7 cents a line for the first, and 4 cents for each subsequent insertion.

SPECIAL NOTICES inserted in Local Column 15 cents per line.

SPECIAL NOTICES preceding marriages and deaths, 10 cents per line for first insertion and 5 cents for every subsequent insertion.

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Poetry.

TAXES! TAXES!!

Taxes! Taxes! nothing but taxes!!!
Taxes upon all that man can eat;
Taxed on our flour, and taxed on our meat,
Taxed upon all that covers his back,
From his cotton shirt, to his broadcloth black.
Taxed on whatever is pleasant to see,
To hear, or smell to feel or to be.
Taxes! taxes! nothing but taxes!!
Grinding our noses as sharp as axes.

AND WHAT ARE THE TAXES FOR?

Why!—the Freedmen's Bureau to keep in repair,
So that Radical loafers can each have a chair,
And a chance for the pickings and stealings there!
Taxes! taxes! Republican taxes!!
Taxed on the coffin, and taxed on the crib
On the old man's shroud, and the baby's bib,
To pamper the bigot, and fatten the knave,
Taxed from the cradle plump into the grave.

AND WHAT ARE THE TAXES FOR?

Why, to buy all the rogues they can find far and near
And give S. M. Clark half a million a year.
Taxes! taxes! Republican Taxes!!
For rich men to shrink, and for poor men to pay,
From the pittance they earn by the work of the day,
By the strain of the muscle, the sweat of the brow,
By the spade and the trowel, the axe and the plow.

AND WHAT ARE THE TAXES FOR?

Why, the Old Constitution to knock all to smash,
And fill over place-holder's pocket with cash.
Hurrah! for the taxes, the jolly old taxes!
Come, friends, get your noses all ground sharp as axes—
Cry Summer and Stevens, Ben. Butler and Wade,
And all our tax Bosses that taxes have made;
You "mud sills" to Yankee philanthropy sold,
Be quiet—obey!—and your... tongues hold.

FOR THAT'S WHAT THE TAX ARE FOR!

The nose-grinding taxes!
The Republican taxes!!
The Radical taxes!!!
The Rascally taxes!!!!
The bondholders' taxes!!!!!
THAT'S JUST WHAT THESE TAXES ARE FOR!

Literary.

Cobweb's Proposals.

"I tell you what it is, girls, it would be glorious fun to take advantage of leap year, and propose to some otee old bachelor, and see what we would do about it," said Cobweb, to the rest of us girls, as we were taking a walk one night, not long since; "what do you think about it, girls?"

We all agreed that it would be glorious fun.

"But who has pluck enough to do it?" said Lou Wilson.

"Who, indeed, but your humble servant," said Cobweb.

"Oh, yes; Cobweb can do it to perfection," said Fan Clark, clapping her hands in high glee, "and you know the rest of us will be around where we can hear all the fun," said I.

"But, Cobweb, how will you manage it?" said Lou. "I know you are equal to any emergency, but I don't seem to think of any one you could practice on this time."

"Well, I do," said Cobweb; "so keep still a moment and I will unfold my plan."

"Go ahead," said all of us in concert, for we well knew there was something rich on hand, when Cobweb put on that face and manner.

"Well, girls," said Cobweb with a smile, "you know there is to be a Leap Year Ball next Monday night, at the Town Hall, and I shall ask 'Old Black' as we girls call him."

"Oh!" said Lou, "you will never dare! he would annihilate you with one of his looks.

"Oh, she! don't you believe yourself. I rather think Cobweb is up to that sort of thing."

"Well, Cobweb," said I, "get the programme all arranged, so that we can hear all the fun."

"Oh, yes, yes," said she, "that is all right."

Well, we got everything arranged before we went home that night, and could hardly wait to see how it would work. First, let me describe "Old Black." In the first place, he is not old, but a fine looking man of about thirty-five years; but his is still, dignified manners, and the fact of his being unmarried, gave him the title of "Old Black," his real name being Mr. Levi Black, and the owner of one of the finest farms in the town of H——, where he lives alone with an old housekeeper.

The next day Cobweb sent him an invitation to the ball, which was promptly accepted; and Cobweb was in high glee. The wished for night at length arrived, and we were all on tip-toe, you may well believe. Cobweb was dressed; she drove up to the door about half past seven and, running up the steps, rang the bell. The old housekeeper came to the door, and looked as though she thought Cobweb was crazy when she asked for Mr. Black, but she managed to ask her to walk in, and she would tell her master she wanted to see him.

"But what under the sun that chit of a thing wants of Mr. Black, I don't see," she muttered, as she went up the stairs.

Cobweb sat down and waited with all patience. Soon she came back, saying he would be ready presently. Cobweb waited an hour, and he did not come; then another hour and no Mr. Black. She was about to ring for some one to find out what the trouble was, when in he came, all smiles, saying:

"Have I been long? I have been hurried so, I am all nerved up."

"Oh, no," said Cobweb, "you have been just no time at all. Well, we will go now, if you are all ready; but it seems hardly possible—you have been so very quick!"

"Oh yes; I am quite ready"

"Well, now we will go."

She waited on him into the buggy, and tucked the robes around him as sober as a judge, and gathered up the reins, and they were soon at the hall. Oh, how honored Cobweb looked, as she came in with Mr. Black hanging on her arm. She gave us a look out of those eyes of hers, that set us all into a laugh; but all the while he was as sober as he could be. But I saw a twinkle in his eye that meant mischief. Well, all went as merry as could be. When supper time came, Cobweb gave us the wink to be on hand, as agreed. We all swallowed our supper as soon as possible, and went and hid in a closet that opened out of the ladies' dressing room, where Cobweb went to entice him after supper, and then propose to him in the most approved style, as she said. We could but just keep still. Soon we saw them come in. Cobweb led him to a seat, and seating herself beside him, she looked over to our hiding place and made a face. That set us all to giggling, and Lou laughed out; but he took no notice of it, so we thought it was all right.

"Dear Mr. Black," said Cobweb, moving up to him and taking his hand, "I have long waited for this opportunity to open my heart to you, but have never until now found one favorable to my purpose."

He looked a little surprised, but did not seem much frightened.

"I have long loved you, and know you to be the guiding star of my existence. Say, now, truly, dear, darling George, do you love me? Don't say no," said she, dropping on one knee. "Don't leave me without hope. Give me some encouragement, and I will be the happiest woman alive. Say, darling, do you love me a little," and she looked up into his face with such a complete counterfeit of devotion, that we were all convulsed with laughter.

He looked at her a moment and then went off into such a fit of laughter as you never heard.

Cobweb straightened up with all the dignity she could command, and looked at him with a face as long as your arm, until he stopped laughing, when he looked up said:

"Well, you did that well; better than I could Miss Reed; and I am glad you have done so, for I could never have had the courage to pop the question; but now you have done the thing—I can only say, I shall only be too happy to love you, and have for a long time. I overheard your conversation that night and determined to take advantage of it. Now I am ready to make you the happiest woman in the world at any time; the sooner the better. "What do you say?"

Cobweb looked up to him, and seeing that he was in earnest, wilted, as Lou said. Then he reached out his hand and drew her to him, saying:

"Now it remains for you to say whether it shall be binding or not? I am willing to abide by my promise, are you? Shall we consider it an engagement or not?" And he drew her to him and planted a kiss on her pouting lips.

"I don't know; let me go," said Cobweb.

"You will tell me soon," said he, as he held her fast. "Promise, then I will let you go." She promised, and he said, "Now, girls, come out here and persuade her she had better marry 'Old Black.'"

We all came out, looking sheepish enough, I expect. I never saw Cobweb cornered before; but I think she will make it all right. We went home in high glee, but Mr. Black would insist upon seeing Cobweb home safe, for he said he always made it a point of duty to look after all valuable property. How the affair will terminate, I dont know; but I hope she will conclude to have him, for he is really a noble fellow; and then such good times as we would have going to see her in that fine old house. If she does, I will let you know all about it. But we shall never forget how she looked when she dropped on her knees, and rolled up her eyes so lovingly at him when she proposed.

THE THREE CRIMES.

An Eastern Tale.

Hamet Abdallah was an inhabitant of a grotto on one of the slopes of Mount Olympus. When he stood at the entrance of his humble dwelling, he could embrace at one glance all the territory originally possessed by Osman, the founder of the Ottoman empire; and, as he five times a day offered up his prayers to Allah, he invoked blessings upon the head of Solyman the Magnificent, the reigning Sultan in whose time he lived. Indeed, Abdallah was renowned for his sanctity; and the inhabitants of the vicinity of his dwelling treated him with the most marked respect.

He was not, however, entitled to this excessive veneration by his age; for he had scarcely attained his fortieth year when the incident of this tale took place. His venerable father, who was himself a dervise of great sanctity, and whose years amounted to four-score, resided with him in the same grotto; and fortunate was deemed the individual who, on his way along the paths of Olympus, was allowed to join in the prayers of the two dervises, kneeling upon the ground at the entrance of the cave, and turning their countenances toward the holy cities of Mecca and Medina.

Hamet Abdallah was one morning roving amidst the groves and woods, which extended up the mountain far above his grotto, and pondering upon the passage in the Korán which he had been pursuing but a short time previously, when his foot suddenly struck against something hard upon the ground. He looked downward, and saw an iron ring fastened to a small brass plate, which was let into a square of stonework, and seemed to cover a hollow place or well. Obeying a sudden impulse of curiosity, Hamet applied his hand to the ring, and pulled it with all his force. After many vain exertions, the brass plate yielded to his exertions, and he fell backward with the sudden shock.

Before he had time to rise and examine the aperture thus laid bare, a dense volume of smoke issued from the hole, and ascended in the air to the height of several thousand feet.

Hamet gazed with astonishment upon this strange apparition; but how much more was his wonder excited when he saw the smoke gradually become more and more palpable and shapely, and at length assume the form of an immense giant, with a long flowing white beard, and a tremendous pine tree in his right hand. [illegible]

Hamet fell upon his knees, and was about to put up a prayer to Heaven, when the terrible apparition addressed him in a voice of thunder:

"Nay; mention not the name of the Deity, or I will cut thee into ten thousand pieces!"

"Who art thou?" demanded Hamet, rising from his suppliant posture.

"I am Kara, an Evil Genius, whom a victorious power shut up in that cursed hole, where I have languished for two thousand years. It is an evil day for thee that brought thee hither.

"And wherefore, proud Genius?" demanded Hamet.

"Because I am about to kill thee, in order to avenge myself upon some one for this long captivity," replied the giant.

At these words, Hamet trembled very much, and besought the Genius to spare his life. For a long time the Genius was inexorable, and ordered him to prepare for immediate death; but at length he suffered himself to be moved by the prayers and entreaties of the virtuous dervise.

"Hark ye," said the Genius; "I am willing to spare your life upon one condition."

"Name it," said Hamet, his heart leaping with joy.

"I will grant your request, I say," proceeded the Genius, "on condition that you perpetrate some crime which may diminish your ever-weaning pride of conscious virtue. Do not interrupt me, for I will tell you upon the spot, what I require of you. Choose between three crimes. Thus Hamet was very sorrowful, and he endeavored to melt the heart of the evil Genius; but all his prayers and entreaties were unavailing. He accordingly began to reason with himself.

"If," said he, "I assassinate my father, no contrition can wipe away my crime, and moreover the law will overtake me with its vengeance. If I curse the name of the great Allah, I may sigh in vain for future happiness in the gardens of Paradise. But if I become inebriate with the juice of the grape, I can expiate that fault by severe mortification, penitence and renewed prayer."

Then, turning his countenance upward toward the Genius, he said. "O fountain of all evil! I have made my choice, since though art determined upon this injury."

"Name the object of that choice," said the Genius.

"I will get drunken with wine as the least of the crimes which you propose," answered the dervise.

"Be it so," cried the Genius; "this evening, after the hour of prayer, thou wilt find a jar of Cyprus wine upon thy table, when thy father has retired to rest in his own cell. Thou mayest fulfill thy promise then; but woe unto thee if thou deceivest me!"

The genius gradually became less palpable as he spoke these words; and, by the time the concluding menace issued from his lips, he had vanished altogether. Hamet retraced his steps toward the grotto, with a sorrowful heart; but he would not confide his anticipated disgrace to the affectionate parent who welcomed his return.

The day passed rapidly away; and in the evening, Hamet and his sire knelt down as usual at the door of the grotto, with their faces toward the south, to raise their voices in prayer. When their vespers were concluded, the old man embraced his son tenderly and retired to the inner part of the grotto.

As soon as Hamet knew that his father slept, he lighted a lamp; and, as the Genius had told him, he saw a large measure of wine standing upon the table. The unhappy dervise raised it to his lips, and drank deeply of the intoxicating draught. A glow of fire seemed as he set the vessel down upon the table. Again he drank; and he felt reckless and careless of the consequences. He drank a third time; and, when he had emptied the measure, he ran out to the door of the grotto, and threw it down the slope of the mountain; then, as he heard it bounding along, he laughed with indescribble mirth. As he turned to enter the grotto, he saw his father standing behind him.

"Son," said the old man, "the noise of revelry awoke me from my slumbers, and it rises to find my well beloved Hamet drunken with wine! Alas! is this merely one of many nights' orgies; and have I now awakened to the dread truth of thine impiety for the first time? Alas! thou hast cast ashes upon the gray head of thy father!"

Hamet could not brook this accusation, and the implied suspicion that he was accustomed to indulge in wine while his father slept. He felt sudden-ly indignant at the language of his sire, and cried, "Return to your couch, old dotard! Thou knowest not what thou sayest!"

And as he uttered those words, he pushed his father violently into the grotto. The old man resisted, and again remonstrated with Hamet. The brain of the son was confused with liquor; and a sudden dread of exposure to the world entered his mind. With the rage of a demon he rushed upon his hoary headed sire, and dashed him furiously against the stone walls of the grotto. The old man fell with his temple against a sharp flint—one groan emanated from his bosom—and his spirit fled forever.

Suddenly conscious of the horrid crime of which he had been guilty, Hamet tore his hair, beat his breast, and raved like a maniac. And in the midst of his ravings, he lifted up his voice against the majesty of heaven, and cursed the Deity whom he had so long and fervently worshipped!

At that instant a terrible din echoed round about—the thunder rolled—the tall trees shook with an earthquake—and, amidst the roar of the conflicting elements, were heard shouts of infernal laughter. All hell seemed to rejoice at the fall of a good man, whom no other vice had ever tempted away from the paths of virtue, until drunkenness presented itself. The rage of the storm increased—the trees were torn up by their roots—and fragments of the rocky parts of Olympus rolled down the hill with the fury of an Alpine avalanche. Then suddenly the Genius appeared before the wretched Hamet, and exclaimed, "Fool! by choosing to commit the crime which seemed to thee least, thou hast committed the other two likewise! For there is more danger in the wine-cup than in any other means of temptation presented by Satan to mankind!"

And the last words of the Genius mingled with the redoubled howling of the storm, as Hamet was borne down the slope of the mountain by the falling masses, and dashed to pieces at the bottom.

A Convict and His Daughter.

A terrible murder had been committed, and the Hotel de Barren, situated on the Rou Saint Saviour, in Paris, was in a terrible ferment. A thousand reports were in circulation, but they all differed very materially. Some declared that during the night a dozen savage-looking men had entered the hotel, armed to the teeth, had bound the servants, and then committed the deed of blood. And yet the domestics were all free. Others said that a single robber had done the work, but as nothing valuable was missing, the lie was given to this assertion. Still others affirmed that a band of immortals had made the visit upon some mission of vengeance, and had taken a soul away with them, leaving an inanimate body behind.

But there was one among the number who gave an account with some degree of calmness. He said that early in the evening he had seen a strange but beautiful looking woman, evidently belonging to the poorer classes, enter the hotel, and although he had kept a close and constant watch, he had not seen her come forth again. Once he thought he had seen her form flit by the window of the apartment where the murder had been committed. But this information was very indefinite, for the woman could not be found—neither had any one else observed such a character. All that was positively known, was that Jerome Desmolines had been stabbed in his bed, and was now a cold and bloody corpse.

Later in the day it was announced that an arrest had been made by the people. Some time before a man by the name of Joan De Rodna had been arrested by the officers of justice, at the instigation of the Desmolines family. He had been found concealed in the hotel under suspicious circumstances, and he was convicted of an attempt at robbery and sentenced to the galleys. But he had escaped, and was known to have breathed dire vengeance against his prosecutors. The night of the murder he had been seen near the hotel, and now that he was arrested, his conviction and death was beyond a question.

The trial came, and De Rodna was condemned to be guillotined.

A young girl had watched the progress of the trial, with a pale and anxious face. When the death penalty was proclaimed, she left the court with a faltering step, and proceeded to an obscure apartment in an obscure street. Here she sat until darkness came on, but she was busily engaged during all this time. She was weaving a silken cord of considerable length, but quite small; yet a sufficient strength to sustain, suspended in the air, the weight of any ordinary sized person. About every twelve inches the rope was knotted, which would prove a great advantage to any person wishing to ascend or descend it, in climbing by its aid, up or down a high wall.

As darkness came on the young girl entered the street having concealed the cord about her person, and then she walked rapidly until she reached the Rou Saint Saviour. She entered a dwelling with out even knocking, but as she was ascending the stairs, she was met by an old woman, who asked: "Does he come here to-night Matilda!"

"I expect him," was the brief reply.

"I thought that affair ended matters between you."

"It may be so; but I will wait."

"Very well."

The old woman continued her descent, while the girl passed on upwards. She did not stop on the third or even the fourth floor, but passed on through the scuttle to the roof. Then she crept cautiously forward until she came to the last building in that row of houses.

She approached the very eaves, having first affixed her silken cord around a chimney, and clinging to it to prevent falling. For two hours she remained in this position, and by this time the street was dark and silent below. She could see that a light was burning in one of the rooms of the third story, and upon the window of this apartment her gaze was fixed.

Presently she began her descent on the cord. It was a fearful situation, for there she hung upon that giddy height, sustained only by that which appeared to be a single thread. If that should break she must be dashed to pieces upon the pavement below.

Carefully the girl crept down on the rope, and at length she placed her feet upon the window ledge. It was a summer night and the window was open. She gazed in, and saw a young man seated in an easy chair, puffing his cigar at his ease. He had not discovered her, as his back was towards the window, and had attracted his attention. In a moment after the girl was standing by his side, and leaping to his feet he exclaimed:

"Matilda De Rodna! *You* here!"

"Yes I am here," she replied with a frown.

"How did you enter my apartment? I am sure I locked the door when I came in." Yet, he continued, for he ascertained by trying that he had done so.

"Perhaps I came in *before* you had entered."

"Ah, I suppose so. But what do you want?"

"I want to talk with you, Henri Desmolines."

"Very well; be seated and let me hear what you have to say."

The girl took a proffered chair, and fixing her eyes upon the young man, said:

"Henri Desmolines, when I met you three years ago I was an innocent and happy girl. I believed all the world to be good and truthful. When you came to me you represented yourself to be a poor artist. I received you. Had I known that you were one of the rich and proud men of the city I should have refused to receive your addresses, because my father was only a tradesman, and the wealthy never stoop to wed daughters of such. But as a poor man, I loved you, and I firmly believed you intended to make me your wife. Innocent and confiding, you deceived me ere the echo of your promises died away; you forsook me, and then I learned all. I did not reproach you, but on the contrary I endeavored to shield you with all my heart. I tried to keep my father in ignorance of my betrayal. But he learned it from another. Then I begged him not to injure you. He promised me that he would but be determined to see you. He called at your hotel, but you denied him admittance to your presence, and ordered your servants to thrust him into the street, which they did. But, bent upon his purpose, he returned again, and you caused his arrest. Your menials swore falsely at your instigation, and I became the ruined daughter of a convict. You thought by this step you could be rid of him—myself you did not fear."

"You have sung this all in my ears before," was the heartless response.

"I will soon sing you a new song."

"Well, go on, and hasten the conclusion."

"My father is to die to-morrow."

"He deserves his fate, for he murdered my brother."

"He did."

"You confess it then?"

"I do. He escaped from the galleys almost a maniac. Smarting under the public wrongs which had been inflicted upon him, it is a wonder that he should seek for revenge?"

"But why did he kill my brother?"

"It was through mistake. The blow was intended for you, Henri Desmolines."

"Well, are you through with what you have to say?"

"No. I want you to save my father's life. You can and you *must* do it."

"You may retire now," replied Henri as he raised and pointed to the door. The girl sprang to her feet, and her eyes glittered, as she exclaimed:

"Henri Desmolines, listen to my words and heed them well, for as I speak so I will act—so I can accomplish. I never thought of shedding blood. But I shall watch to-morrow, and if my father dies I shall return to you, and I shall stab you to the heart, even as he did your brother. Before my God I have sworn to do this."

"Oh, you threaten, do you? I think to-morrow will find you in the prison cell. Not that I fear you, for you will not be able to reach my room again without discovery. But I would punish you for your threat." He stepped towards the bellpull, and even while his back was turned Matilda passed out of the window, ascended her slender cord, and was again on the roof. She saw her former lover thrust his head out, and look down towards the ground. Then she heard him say:

"She could not have escaped, except by this window. If she has fallen, she certainly has been dashed to pieces, and so I shall be rid of her for ever."

Oh, how those cruel words rankled in that poor girl's heart, as all that long and dreary night she sat in her lonely room. Each passing hour she counted, as proclaimed by a distant clock, until the morning came. Then the hour for the execution arrived, and soon she knew that she was fatherless—the guillotine had done its horrible work.

The night came on again, and it was beautifully brilliant. It was one fitted rather for love than for vengeance, but still that girl did not hesitate, for the oath had been taken, and must be kept.

Again she entered the same dwelling where a hundred times she had met her lover, and ascended to the roof. Again she stood upon that of the Hotel de Ravoin, and affixed her cord. She looked down towards the window, and saw lazy wreathes of smoke rolling out. She believed that Henri was seated there with his cigar, and soon she knew this was the case, for she heard him singing a lively air.

Presently his head appeared in view. He gazed around in every direction, and then felt downwards with his hands, as if searching for something. After this he disappeared.

Quickly did Matilda slide down her cord. She gazed into the apartment, and she saw Henri examine every corner where a human being could be possibly concealed. Then he locked and bolted the door, and retired to his couch. The avenger watched him until she thought he was sleeping, and then she entered and approached his side. She took up his revolver, which was lying upon the table, and cocked it for use. The click of the hammer aroused him, and startling up he cried:

"Here again! My God! How did you enter?"

The only reply was the leveling of the weapon at his head. He yelled for help, but with the sound of his voice came the pistol's report, and the betrayer back dead. In a moment after, the avenger reached the roof, and returned from thence to her home.

Of course there was another terrible excitement at the hotel, but this time the affair remained shrouded in mystery. Six months after, a poor creature died in a lonely attic, of a broken heart. Her name was Matilda de Rodna, and dying she gave to a friend the secret of her revenge, which until that moment had remained unexplained.

Guard Against Vulgarity.

We especially commend the following extract to the thoughtful study of the young. Nothing is so disgusting and repugnant to the feelings of the noble and the good as to hear the young, or even the old, use profane or low; vulgar language. The young of our town are particularly guilty of profanity. In our day it seems the "boy" does not feel himself a "man" unless he can excel in this great sin:

"We would guard the young against the use of every word that is not strictly proper. Use no profane expression—allude to no sentence that will put to blush the most sensitive. You know not the tendency of habitually using indecent and profane language. I may never be obliterated from your heart. When you grow up, you will find at your tongue's end some expression which you would not use for any money. It was one used when you were quite young. By being careful you will save yourself a deal of mortification and sorrow. Good men have been taken sick and become delirous. In these moments they used the most vile and indecent language imaginable. When informed of it, after restoration to health, they had no idea of the pain they had given their friends, and stated that they had learned and repeated the expression in childhood, and though years had passed since they had spoken a bad word, they had been indelibly stamped upon the heart. Think of this, you who are tempted to use improper language, and never disgrace yourselves."

What Did Paul Say?

Many years ago there lived in Virginia a Baptist preacher, named B.—— Though uneducated, he was a sound thinker and an eloquent speaker, and no minister had a more devoted flock. It was the custom, during the inclement season, to hold meetings, at the residences of the members, and once or twice during the winter at the house of the preacher. For many years it said that B. never preached nor conducted the meetings when held at his house, but secured the services of some neighboring minister. He was often pressed for an explanation without success; but finally, in response to the importunities of some of his flock, gave the following:

When I was much younger than now—in fact, soon after the commencement of my ministration—I held a meeting at my own house. It being customary for many of the congregation to remain for dinner, Mrs. B. sent our negro boy Tim to neighbor Paul's for some butter. Tim returned and located himself, standing on one foot at a time, in the outskirts of the congregation. Being well warmed up in my sermon, thinking neither of Tim nor his errand, but only of the most successful mode of pressing among my hearers one of my strongest arguments, I demanded, with all the energy in my power:

"And what did Paul say?"

Tim at the top of his little squeaking voice, exclaimed, as Tim only could have done:

"He died you couldn't git any more butter till you paid for what you had got!"

This brought down the house, and cut short one of the finest efforts of my early ministry; and since then I have kept my preaching disconnected from my domestic affairs.

Fell from Grace.

Old Billy G——had attended a great revival, and, with many others, was converted and baptized. Not many weeks after, one of his friends met him reeling home with a considerable brick in his hat.

"Hello, Billy," said the friend, "I thought you had joined the church."

"So I did," answered Billy, making a desperate effort to stand steady, "so I did, and would have been a good Baptist, if they hadn't treated me so everlasting mean at the water. Didn't you hear about it?"

"Never did."

"Well, you see, when we cum to the baptizing place, thar was me and rich old squire Joe Smith, to be dipped at the same time. Well, the parson took the squire in first, but I didn't mind that much, as I thought 'twould be just as good when I oum; so he led him in, and after dippin' him he raised him mity keerful, and wiped his face and led him out. Then cum my turn, and instead of liftin' me out, as he did the squire, he gave me one sloan, and left me crawlin' round on the bottom like a darned mud turtle."

MARTIN VAN BUREN.

BY JAMES PARTON.

"None but the brave deserve the fair!"

There is a deeper truth in this familiar saying than many of us are aware of. Every great career, every grand reform, every benificent revolution, dates from an act of courage; and all the names dearest to mankind were made such by the valor of those who bore them.

Martin Van Buren, though possessed of many excellent and some admirable qualities, though he rendered his party and his country valuable services, was wanting in the heroic traits, and hence his name has not that magical power with his countrymen which some men possess who were apparently his inferiors. As a public man, he was Prudence incarnate. He appeared to be always on his guard against committing himself. He never took the dangerous initiate. He was never the real leader. Nevertheless, as no man is responsible for gifts which he does not possess, and as Mr. Van Buren made a good use of those which he did possess, he is entitled to our respect, and will probably grow in the esteem of his countrymen the better he is known. We can, at least, say of him, that he was personally pure. He was faithful to his word. He was an honest man.

Martin Van Buren was born in 1782, at Kinderhook, in the State of New York, in a log house. His father, a good-natured, illiterate man, possessed a few acres of land, and, it is said, eked out his livelihood by keeping a village tavern. His mother, tradition reports, was a truly superior woman, very active and polite, well versed in the politics of the day, and wise in managing the family affairs. The boy being uncommonly handsome and intelligent, every one said he was capable of doing better work in life than tavern-keeping. Therefore, after attending the village school until he was fourteen years of age he was regularly apprenticed to the attorney of the village for the usual period of seven years. Many people now living remember the boy, and tell how he used to read law in this manner, while graduates of colleges, who could pay high premiums to their instructors, were admitted after only three years study. According to the custom of the time, this apprentice swept out his master's office, dusted his books, arranged his papers, and *probably* groomed his horse and dug in his garden.

Before he had completed his term of apprenticeship, he obtained a release from his master, and went to New York to finish his studies. There he entered the office of Wm. P. Van Ness, a famous lawyer at that day, and still more famous as a democratic politician, but now only remembered as the second of Aaron Burr in his lamentable duel with Alexander Hamilton. Aaron Burr had a particular fondness for aiding and advising young men of promise. Seeing this diligent, polite and handsome youth in the office of his friend Van Ness, he cultivated his acquaintance, and made much of him, invited him to his house, and imparted to him the results of his experience in politics and in his profession. These conversations, it is supposed, stamped the forming character of this young man, and nourished in him that instinct of caution and secrecy to which allusion has been made above. But if it was Aaron Burr who taught Martin Van Buren the tricks and artifices of politics, he learned from the President, Thomas Jefferson, those fundamental principles of democracy which Burr despised.

In his twenty-first year, Mr. Van Buren returned to his native Kinderhook and began the profession of the law. The first vote which he ever cast in his life does him much honor. It was at an election for Governor of the State, in which Morgan Lewis was the regular candidate of the democratic party, and Aaron Burr was an irregular or bolting candidate. Van Buren's personal feelings, if he had allowed himself to be guided by them, would have led him to vote for the brilliant and fascinating Burr, from whom he had received attentions so unexpected and so flattering. He stood by his principles, however, and gave his maiden vote for Lewis.

From 1803 to 1808 he was known only as an adroit, polite, persuasive country lawyer and politician. In 1808, being then 26 years of age, he was appointed by Governor Tompkins surrogate of his native county, and held the office four years. Removed from this office by a turn in the politics of the State, he was elected in 1812 a member of the Legislature. It was while living at Albany in this capacity that he next saw his early friend Burr, who was then a fallen, utterly ruined man, just returned from his long residence in Europe. Mr. Van Buren entertained him in his own house for several days—made quiet little parties for him, and treated him with as much distinction as though he were still the powerful and prosperous Colonel Burr of 1802. Indeed, they remained on terms of intimacy as long as Burr lived.

After twenty-three years of faithful service to his friends and his party, Martin Van Buren held the politics of New York in his hands, and represented the State in the Senate of the United States. The Presidential campaign of 1828 was at hand. John Quincy Adams was the President, and expected to be re-elected. Andrew Jackson, the candidate of the opposition, would probably have been supported by Van Buren in any case. But that as it may, it is certainly known that he was offered the post of Secretary of State by Gen. Jackson, a year before Jackson had it to give, and that Mr. Van Buren accepted the offer, and thus bound himself to the General's support.

By a series of the most skillful measures, he secured the vote of the State for Gen. Jackson, who was elected. At the same election Martin Van Buren was elected Governor of New York.

On the fourth of March, 1829, Gen. Jackson was inaugurated President. According to the programme arranged so long before, Mr. Van Buren resigned his Governorship, and accepted the proffered office of Secretary of State. Arriving at Washington three weeks after the inauguration, he found the President in a fury, and all the upper circles of Washington in a state of the most intense excitement. John Eaton, Secretary of War, had thought proper to marry a widow who was not regarded in Washington, as a reputable woman, and, consequently, the wives of the other members of the Cabinet refused to visit or notice her. Gen. Jackson, an old friend of the lady's parents, was convinced of her innocence, and was determined that she should be recognized and visited as a proper member of society. The ladies, however, would not yield the point, which roused in a indignation of the fiery Jackson to the highest degree conceivable. Next to the battle of New Orleans, this appears to have been the fight that most inflamed his warlike passions.

In the midst of the imbroglio Mr. Van Buren came upon the scene. He was a widower; he had no daughters; there were no ladies in his family; he was a free man! As a matter of course, he called upon Mrs. Eaton, with whose husband he had been long and intimately acquainted. He paid Mrs. Eaton the most marked and assiduous attentions. This conduct so completely won the affections of Gen. Jackson, that, from that time, the elevation of Mr. Van Buren to the Presidency became one of the leading objects of his policy. The President's efforts, ably seconded by Mr. Van Buren's friends and enemies, were crowned with success, and Mr. Van Buren was inaugurated President in 1837.

Called to the Presidency at a very trying period, his conduct was, upon the whole, wise and right; he did some good and prevented much harm. Falling of a re-election in 1840 he retired to a beautiful farm at Kinderhook, and spent the long evening of his life in the peaceful labors of agriculture, and in recording his own experience for the benefit of posterity. He died in 1862, aged 80 years.

One volume of his memoirs has already been published, and it is creditable to his memory. He remained to the last a Jeffersonian Democrat. The following are among the closing sentences of this volume:

"For the signal success of its beneficent and glorious mission, this country is indebted to the virtue and intelligence of the men of whom this great party (the Democratic) has, from time to time, been composed; much to the ability, industry and devoted patriotism of James Madison; largely to the iron-will, fearlessness and uprightness of Andrew Jackson; and more conspicuously still to the genius, the honest and firm heart and spirit-stirring pen of its founder, Thomas Jefferson, who stands, in my estimation, as a faithful republican, pure patriot, and wise and accomplished statesman, *unequaled in the history of man!"*

Speech of Gen. Wm. B. Franklin.

The following eminent soldiers were present at the opening of the Sailors' and Soldiers' Convention in New York: Generals William F. Smith, Slocum, Averill, McClernand, Andrew Porter, T. Kilby Smith, Ewing, Granger, McCandless, and a host of others. As their Representative General Wm. B. Franklin spoke as follows:

Fellow Soldiers and Sailors: I thank you for this high and undeserved compliment. Never having presided in any body regulated by parliamentary law, I shall have to claim your indulgence for any mistakes which I may make. But I hope that no serious questions of order will arise. If they do, I shall decide them as impartially as I can, and I look confidently to the fairness and justice of the Convention for an endorsement of the decision of the Chair. [Applause] It is, I hope, not amiss for me to give in a few words what are my ideas of the objects and duties of this Convention. Since the commencement of this government secret societies of military men who have served, have been viewed by the people with intense jealousy. This view is a natural and proper one. It is the duty of military men in a free country, when they no longer in service, to return to their peaceful avocations (applause), and if they desire to be heard in the civil councils of the nation, to take their places with other civilians, and by legal and usual means exert the influence which their position and services give them. They have no right (and I mean it in the broadest sense of the term) to attempt to exercise influence or gain power from their positions as military men. [Prolonged applause.] The exercise of such influence will in the end be subversive of free institutions, and will surely prepare the grave of liberty, paving the way for a military despot, who will rule this whole country with the sword, just as one-third of it has been ruled for the last three years. Under the influence of these military societies, elections will in a short time become the merest farce, and Prætorian bands will designate our Mayors, Governors, and Presidents. [Voice, "That's so."] I am correct in these assertions, in the sense that the history of our country will bear me out in them, it may be properly asked what we are doing here in convention, and are not we acting precisely in the manner which I have deprecated? The question is pertinent and must be answered. In the first place our Convention is no secret association. Next, there is now existing in the Northern and Western States, and for aught I know, in the Southern States, a secret military organization which has its ramifications in every corner of the land. It is powerful and powerful, assumes to itself all of the patriotism which carried men into the field on our side during the rebellion, and its objects are unknown to any outside of its ranks, unless we can judge of them by its acts. I refer to the self-styled Grand Army of the Republic. [Hisses.] Whatever may have been the object of the originators of this organization, and I will admit that it may have been a good one, I hold it to be dangerous in a free country, and for wherever it is felt it has for its object to gain success for one side in politics. [Applause.] The natural effect of this military partisanship is to band together such military men as do not agree with it, and the balance of the country, that does not feel this pressure most bitterly, to meet the obnoxious organization by another which, in my opinion, would be no less obnoxious. [Applause.] We will thus soon have two organizations extending over the whole country, military, or with access to arms, as different as day and night in their feelings of what is right in civil affairs, and ready to fly at each other's throats at the bidding of any military charlatans whom accident or ambition may place at their head. I need not remind you how small a cloud is no bigger than a man's hand, but events march with rapid strides in times like these, and the storm may be upon us before we know it. Should it come it will sweep over this whole country with such destructive effect that our late struggle will sink into insignificance before it, and we will be left an imbecile Mexico. I think, therefore, that one object of this Convention should be to show to the country, and to give assurance to the people, that the Conservative military men do not intend to be led into any secret military societies, and that any such societies of them shall be as citizens, in combination with other Conservative citizens. [Great cheering.]—Those Conservative soldiers and sailors who now belong to any secret military societies, should be advised to leave them at once. [Renewed cheering.] This convention has another object which is, I think, quite as important as that just named. In May last a Military Convention sat in Chicago, at which were present delegates from many of the States, called itself the Soldiers and Sailors' Convention, but it bore the ear-marks of the odious and obnoxious organization before mentioned. In its resolutions it spoke for itself, "and the soldiers and sailors who imperilled their lives for the Union." [Hisses.] These resolutions contain many things which we utterly repudiate. They condemn the President, approve the course of the Radicals, and give the views of the convention on several political subjects. Fellow-soldiers, do that convention speak for us? [Voices, "No," "no," "no."] Are there not in this large assemblage soldiers and sailors who imperilled their lives for the Union? [Voices, "Yes."] Did it speak for them? Therefore, fellow-soldiers, another object of this convention is, in my opinion, to show to the country that that Chicago Convention did not in any respect speak the wishes of the large number of the military men of the United States represented here to-day. One would suppose from the resolutions of that Chicago Convention that the Radicals were true friends of the soldiers and sailors. But the Radical record for the last three years tells a different story. [Applause.] With very few exceptions, it has been the crime in the Radical Senate to reject all soldiers and sailors' nominations to civil office. Thus as Foreign Ministers, Generals McClellan and Blair (cheers) have been rejected. As Collectors of the Customs, Generals Slocum, Couch, and Curtis (cheers) have been rejected. General Pratt was rejected as Collector of Internal Revenue. These are a few instances the merits of which I know personally. The officers named commanded armies, corps and divisions. Not a word can be said against