

Poetical Selections.

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER.

Life is a race where some succeed,
While others are beginning;
'Tis luck in some, in others speed,
That give an early winning;
But if you chance to fall behind,
Ne'er slacken your endeavor,
Just keep this wholesome truth in mind—
" 'Tis better late than never!"

And if you keep ahead 'tis well,
But never trip your neighbor;
'Tis noble when you can excel
By honest, patient labor;
But if you are outstipped at first,
Press on as bold as ever,
Remember, though you are surpassed,
" 'Tis better late than never!"

Ne'er labor for an idle boast,
Or victory o'er another;
But while you strive your uttermost,
Deal fairly with a brother,
Whate'er your station, do your best,
And hold your purpose ever;
And if you fall to the rest,
" 'Tis better late than never!"

Choose well the path in which you run,
Succeed by noble bearing;
Then, though the last, when once 'tis won,
Your crown is worth the wearing,
Then never fret if left behind,
Nor slacken your endeavor;
But ever keep this truth in mind—
" 'Tis better late than never!"

THE BOLD SHOEMAKER.

A Revolutionary Incident of New York.

ONE night, in the middle of June, 1778, a couple of flat-bottomed boats left the Jersey shore, from the bay inside of Bedlow's island, and pulled, under cover of the darkness of the night, outside of Governor's Island, for Gowanus Bay, on the Long Island shore. The two boats contained twenty Jersey militiamen, under the command of Captain Marriner. And who was Captain Marriner?

Marriner was a New York shoemaker, who had been apprehended by order of Mr. Mathews, Mayor of New York, soon after the British entered the city. He had been a noted whig, but for some private reason did not leave when the Americans retreated, and on his arrest was thrust into the Provost, where he was treated with great inhumanity. He contrived to make his escape, swearing vengeance against Mayor Mathews.—Having learned that Mr. Mathews occasionally stopped with his family over night at Flatbush, Long Island, Marriner made up a party to carry him off—and this was his object in crossing New York Bay at midnight.

Carefully avoiding the men-of-war at anchor, the two boats pulled across, one keeping directly in the wake of the other, and they reached Gowanus Bay without notice or molestation. Dragging the boats up on the beach, it being low water, Marriner, with fifteen men, leaving the other five in charge of the boats, struck across the hills for Flatbush. His men were all well armed, for there were patrolling parties of British and Hessians day and night, over most of that part of Long Island; and if fallen in with they knew the consequences must be desperate on both sides.

Many of the officers who had been taken at Fort Washington two years before, were paroled on Long Island, and were billeted on the farmers in and about Flatbush. Among them were Colonels Miles, Alice, Rawlins, Major Williams, Captains Stewart, Foster, and others. A Captain Flahaven, who was confined in the Provost, at New York, with Marriner, had also been quartered at Long Island.

Jacob Suydam was a Dutch Tory farmer at Flatbush, and, for aught that we know, some of his descendants still reside there. He was a well-meaning kind of man, but loved more than all the *two dollars per week* which was allowed him for boarding such of the American officers as, by order of the British commissary, Loring, were quartered at his house. Captain Graydon, in his interesting memoirs, has left some rather curious particulars of his mode of living whilst a prisoner at Jacob Suydam's. For breakfast they had a dish of weak bohea tea, sweetened with a muddy substance called sugar; bread half baked—for fuel, owing to the necessities of the British army in New York, was very scarce—with a little stale butter. For dinner, Graydon says they had at first a little boiled pickled beef; but this being soon eat up, clippers or clams were introduced in its stead,

with a few vegetables occasionally. At supper they had "suppaw," with buttermilk, sweetened with molasses—a meal that at first he could hardly stomach; but at length he came to like the suppaw, buttermilk, and molasses better than his breakfast or dinner. Suydam furnished the best he could afford for the price in those days, particularly as American officers were poor paymasters, for they seldom received any pay themselves.

The simplicity of grace at meals, as shown by Jacob Suydam, was quite primitive, and we believe it still exists among the Dutch farmers, who have not entirely forgotten the customs of their ancestors. On sitting down to his meals honest Jacob would cock his head on one side, clap his hands together, shut his eyes, and remain in this silent attitude for about a minute. This was his grace over meals in which singular manner those around joined in if they chose.

Jacob's house, or rather houses, for it was a cluster of them built at different periods, had in front a piazza which extended the whole length of the building. This part of the house was occupied by Thopylact Bache and family, a merchant of New York, who remained attached to the royal cause. The dwelling in which Mr. Mathews, the Mayor of New York, resided occasionally, was nearly opposite that of Suydam. On the night of Marriner's landing, the only persons at Suydam's, with exception of the family, were Captain Forrest, of Shee's regiment, taken at Fort Washington, Major Moncrieff, of the British army, (father of the somewhat notorious Mrs. Coghlan), and Mr. Bache, of New York, and his family.—I have remarked that it was a June evening. The day had been hot and sultry, but now a cool breeze played along the piazza; and although the hour was late, Captain Forrest, Major Moncrieff, and Mr. Bache, with his wife, were enjoying the calm beauty of the night.

"I tell you what it is, Forrest, my boy," said Major Moncrieff,—a fine, bold specimen of a British veteran—"you had better abandon the side of Congress. It is no use contending with the troops of his majesty; your Congress and Washington have now been trying the game for three years in vain, and they must soon give in. So join us in time, my boy."

"Why, major," replied Forrest, "for the same reasons I might urge you to join *my* cause—the cause of the people. King George the Third, the most powerful monarch on the globe, with the largest army—say, armies—ever seen on this continent, has in vain endeavored, during the three years you speak of to conquer Congress and Washington, but it is not now as near it as he was the first year. So come over to us, major! Come over to us!" This was in a tone of raillery.

"You forget, Forrest, that the bulldog worries before he kills," remarked Mr. Bache, joining in the conversation.

"Aye, and sometimes tires himself to death in so doing, I am told," replied the American officer. "I have been a prisoner two years, and shall probably remain so one or two years longer, if joining the royal cause is to be my only chance of obtaining my freedom."

"What stubborn men you rebel officers are!" said a female voice from a corner of the piazza. "A short time ago I heard that handsome Marylander, Major Williams, whose fine appearance has captivated most of our New York belles declare he would not marry a lady, were she beautiful as Venus, and had the dower of a princess unless she was a whig."

"Probably he would not have said so, had Mrs. Bache been single," answered Forrest, with the gallantry of an officer.

"Really, I must give you continental gentlemen the meed both of gallantry and compliment," was the reply of the lady.

Suydam's negro, Hans, who had been probably attending some frolic of his sable race at a neighboring farm house, came along the road singing:

De rebels, da is gone to pieces,
Washington hab lost his breeches;
In de Congress no more speeches—
Yah, yah, yah!
Great King George he hang de boobies,
De debbil take de Yankee Doodles—
Yah, yah, yah!
Yah, yah!—he hab 'em all.

Forrest burst into a laugh as he heard the negro's song, in which the party on the piazza could not help but join, it was sung in such a comic negro way. It was one verse of a song which some jovial British officer had put together for the negroes on Long Island, and was much sung by them when at work. Hans continued his song, though it was evident

he was well under the influence of liquor:

Nigga, royal—come from Guinea,
When he little pickaninny:
Dam for rebel he beginny—
Yah, yah, yah!
Washington he berry bad man,
Debbil take 'em such a mad man—
Yah, yah, yah!
Yah, yah, he hab 'em all!
General Howe, he berry brave boy—
Washington, him am a knave boy:
Cotch and flog him like a slave boy—
Yah, yah, yah!
How de red-coats make 'em run!
Kill de rebels ebery—

Hans did not have an opportunity to finish the last line, for a hand was placed over his mouth, whilst an athletic gripe seized him by the throat, and a stern voice, in a low tone, but audible to those on the piazza, exclaimed:

"You black scoundrel, if you sing another verse of that infernal song, or breathe a syllable, I'll cut out your tongue—you thick-skulled son of the devil!"

The parties on the piazza heard this distinctly, but the night was too dark to perceive anything on the road. Half a minute, however, sufficed to explain the affair. Five or six men appeared on the piazza, completely armed, the leader exclaiming in the same low, but distinct tone:

"You are all my prisoners! Remain quiet and you shall suffer no harm; raise the least alarm, and I will shoot whoever attempts it. Is there any American officer here?"

It was Marriner.
"Yes," said Forest I am one."
"Good!" said Marriner. You shall have a chance to see the continental camp again. But where is Captain Flahaven? I must save him! This is Jacob Suydam's house, is it not?"

"You are too late to save Flahaven, I am sorry to say. He was taken from his parole yesterday, and carried to the city."
"How unfortunate! To release him was one of my principal objects. We were comrades in misfortune in that cursed Provost prison in New York. Who are these people?"

Forrest briefly told him who they were, and Marriner replied that the lady could go to her chamber unmolested, but if she made the least alarm her husband would be the sufferer. He placed a guard of three men over Mr. Bache and Major Moncrieff, and observed to Forrest—

"As you belong to the continental regulars, captain, I suppose you are rather above becoming a party to my exploits. Remain here, if you please, my destination is Mr. Mathews' house. That gentleman I understand is at home; and if I get hold of him, he shall pay for the treatment I received at his hands."

Marriner and his party immediately went across the road and surrounded the house of Mathews, the Mayor of New York. The doors were all closed and fastened, and it became necessary to break open the principal entrance—an act which took some time and made some noise.

Mathews, who was really in the house, but in bed, was aroused by his wife, and cautiously looking out, perceived at once that it was a rebel party, and that escape was impossible. Fortunately for himself he was not perceived.

"I have but one course to pursue," said he to his wife. "Give me a blanket I have no time to dress myself: the roof is flat, and the party will not think of searching for me there. Call up the servants, while I ascend, and bid them say I left for the city at dusk last night."

Seizing a blanket, he crawled out of an old-fashioned dormer window, which was some distance from the gutter, and made his way on to the roof. Mrs. Mathews had hardly time to call in the servants and give them their orders before Marriner and his party entered the house. Previous to their so doing, she had the precaution to thrust her husband's clothes out of the window on to the gutter beyond sight.

"Your servant, madam," said Marriner, as he had entered the room, where was Mrs. Mathews in her night dress, surrounded by two or three affrighted domestics. "I come for your husband—tell me where he is. I assure you no harm shall happen to you."

"My husband is in the city, I hope."
Marriner's eye glanced over the apartment and towards the bed.

"He was here madam."
"Very true—yesterday."
"Search the house, men, but disturb nothing."

A thorough search took place in the house, but no discovery of the fugitive was made. In the meantime an alarm had taken place. Guns were firing at a distance, and some of the neighbors had

dispatched an express to Brooklyn for troops.

Marriner, finding that Mathews, his chief object, had escaped, ordered his men to cross over to Suydam's. Here he ordered Bache and Moncrieff to go with him to his boats as prisoners, Captain Forrest rejoicing of course in his own good fortune. He had been a prisoner two years, and now he was about to be free again. The party of soldiers made their way as fast as possible to their boats, from which they had been absent about two hours, and alarm guns were rapidly firing in all directions.

It was fortunate for them that they did make haste, for the five soldiers left in charge of the two boats hearing the guns fired, supposed Marriner and his men had been taken, and made off as quick as possible in one of the boats, for fear of being captured themselves. Just as Marriner and his party with their prisoners reached the beach, the tide had ascended high enough to float the remaining boat, and she was about going adrift. Getting on board, they pulled for the Jersey shore and reached it in safety, where Marriner dispatched his prisoners with Captain Forrest to head-quarters. Tradition states that Major Moncrieff bore his capture with a soldier's fortitude, but poor Mr. Bache was overwhelmed with grief, which was only allayed when he was released, by Washington's orders, on parole.

Jake's Blind Horse.

FOR twenty-three years, old Jake Willard has cultivated the soil of Baldwin county, Va., and drew therefrom a support for himself and wife. He was childless. Not long ago Jake left the house in search of a missing cow. His route led him through an old, worn out patch of clay land, of about six acres in extent, in the center of which was a well twenty or thirty feet deep, that at some time probably had furnished the inhabitants of a ruined house near by with water. In passing this spot, an ill wind lifted Jake's hat from his head, and maliciously wafted it to the edge of the well, and in it tumbled.

Now Jake had always practiced economy, and he immediately set about recovering the hat. He ran to the well and finding it was dry at the bottom, he uncoiled the rope which he had brought along for the purpose of capturing the cow, and after several attempts to catch the hat with a noose, he concluded to save time by going down into the well himself. To accomplish this, he made fast one end of the rope to a stump, near by, and was quickly on his way down the well.

It is a fact, of which Jake was no less obvious than the reader thereof, that Ned Wells was in the ruined building aforesaid, and that an old blind horse with a bell on his neck, who had been turned out to die, was lazily grazing within a short distance of the well.

The devil himself, or some other wicked spirit, put it into Ned's cranium to have a bit of fun; so he quietly slipped up to the old horse, and unbuckling the bell-strap, approached the well with a slow and measured "ling-a-ling," when Jake cried: "Oh, my! that old blind horse! he's comin' this way sure, ain't got no more sense than to fall in here! Whoa! Ball! Whoa!"

But the continued approach of the "ling-a-ling" said just as plain as words that Ball wouldn't whoa. Besides, Jake was at the bottom resting, before trying to "shin it up the rope."

"What shall I do?" he said, "the old horse would be a-top of me before I can say Jack Robinson. Whoa! whoa!"

Just then Ned drew up to the edge of the well, and with his foot kicked a little dirt into it.

"Oh, Lord" exclaimed Jake, falling upon his knees. "I'm gone now! whoa! Now I lay me down to sleep"—w-h-o-a, Ball!—I pray the Lord my soult"—w-h-o-a, now! whoa! Oh, Lord, have mercy on me!"

Ned could hold in no longer, and fearing that Jake might suffer from his fright, he revealed himself.

Then he made tracks! Jake was at the top of the well in "double quick," and his wrath was—well, it can better be imagined than described; and if he learns who wrote this—well, this will probably be the last you'll ever get from me.

At Vienna a manufacturer has carried out the happy idea of printing pocket-handkerchiefs with maps of the theatre of war. They have been a great success, every body wishing to poke his nose into Alsace and Lorraine without risk.

SUNDAY READING.

The Highlander's Prayer.

A Scotch Highlander, who served in the first disastrous war with the American colonies, was brought one evening before his commanding officer, charged with the capital offense of being in direct communication with the enemy. The charge could not well be preferred at a more dangerous time. Only a few weeks had elapsed since the execution of Major Andre, and the indignation of the British exasperated almost to madness by the event, had not yet cooled down. There was, however, no proof against the Highlander. He had been seen, in the gray of the twilight, stealing out from a clump of underwood that bordered one of the huge forests, which then covered much the greater part of the United Provinces, and which in the immediate neighborhood of the British, swarmed with the troops of Washington. All the rest was mere imagination and conjecture. The poor man's defence was summed up in a few words. He had stolen away from his fellows, he said, to spend a few hours in private prayer.

"Have you been in the habit of spending hours in private prayer?" sternly asked the officer, himself a Scotchman and a Presbyterian.

The Highlander replied in the affirmative.

"Then," said the other, drawing out his watch, "never in your life had you more need of prayer than now; kneel down, sir, and pray aloud, that we may all hear you."

The Highlander in the expectation of instant death, knelt down. His prayer was that of one long acquainted with the appropriate language in which the Christian addresses his God. It breathed of imminent peril, and earnestly implored the Divine interposition in the threatened danger, the help of him who in times of extremity is strong to deliver. It exhibited, in short, a man who, thoroughly conversant with the scheme of redemption, and fully impressed with the necessity of a personal interest in the advantages it secures, had made the business of salvation the work of many a solitary hour, and had in consequence, acquired much fluency in expressing all his various wants as they occurred, and thoughts as they arose.

"You may go, sir," said the officer, as he concluded; "you have, I dare say, not been in correspondence with the enemy to-night."

"His statement," he continued, addressing himself to the other officers, "is I doubt not, perfectly correct. No one could have prayed so without a long apprenticeship; fellows who have not attended drill always get on ill at review.—Hugh Miller.

Frederick and his Page.

Frederick the Great, King of Prussia one day rung his bell, and nobody answering he opened his door and found his page fast asleep in an elbow chair. He advanced toward him, and was going to wake him, when he perceived part of a letter hanging out of his pocket. His curiosity prompted him to know what it was, and he took it out and read it. As he was a kind-hearted king, let us forgive his doing what he had no right to do without leave.

It was a letter from this young man's mother, in which she thanked him for having sent her a part of his wages to relieve her misery, and finished with telling him that God would reward him for this dutiful affection.

The King, after reading it, went back softly into his chamber, took a bag full of ducats, and slipped it, with the letter, into the page's pocket.

Returning to his chamber, he rang the bell so loudly that it awakened the page, who instantly made his appearance.

"You have had a sound sleep," said the king.

The page was at a loss how to excuse himself, and putting his hand into his pocket, to his utter astonishment he there found a purse of ducats. He took it out, turned pale, and looked at the king, and burst into tears without being able to utter a single word.

"What is the matter?"
"Ah sire," said the young man throwing himself on his knees, "somebody seeks my ruin. I know nothing of this money which I have just found in my pocket!"

"My young friend," said Frederick, "God often does great things for us in our sleep; send that to your mother; salute her on my part, and assure her that I will take care of both her and you."