

## A Reasonable Price.

WE take the following amusing story from an interesting article on the "Crackers," or poor whites of the South, in the November number of *Lippincott's Monthly*. The writer was engaged on a survey for the United States Government through the State of Florida. The 'clearings' that were rendered necessary brought the surveying party in collision with the 'Cracker' natives. The writer says:

Sometimes the avenue would shave a man's house, and shade trees would have to be sacrificed. Sometimes, but rarely, an orchard would be ravaged. It is needless to say that for all damage thus done to the property the government unhesitatingly paid; and paid as it does not often do—in cash. This fact did not, however, seem to be known to our Cracker friends who sojourned in the county of Starke. One day it happened that the line struck a "dead-end" belonging to an agriculturist of that fertile tract, and went first through his corn field (the corn being about three feet high), and then through a large and thrifty patch of sweet potatoes. The avenue was fifty feet wide—the trees fell on all sides.—What with the trampling of the negroes and the falling of the trees, it may be readily surmised that there were not many corn or potato plants left uninjured through the length and breadth of that avenue.

In the midst of the devastation the officer in charge—a stalwart Kentuckian, now an able and eloquent clergyman—was sitting on the fence smoking and calmly surveying the havoc, when to him rode up a youth, bare as to the feet and legs, sunburnt as to the hair, but irate and determined as to the countenance.

"See hyar, stranger," said he, "this hyar won't do."

"Won't it?" said Y., imperturbly.—"Well, if it isn't straight, it's B.'s fault, for he lined it."

"I don't know nothin' 'bout lines 'cept my allers sez she hez hern but this hyar cuttin' through folks' dead-endin' an' smashin' thar co'n and eaters—hit won't do, an' we're a goin' tu stop hit!"

"Who are?"

"Why, dad an' the neighbors, an'—an' me." Here he swelled and looked important. "Dad's gone to rise the neighbors now, and sent me over hyar tu tell you to make tracks 'fore wuss comes of hit."

While the boy was speaking quite a commotion was observed at the house, which stood about a quarter of a mile off, and several long, lean, sunburnt fellows, each with his rifle or double-barreled gun across his horse rode up to the porch.—Soon one of them detached himself from the crowd and rode slowly and with dignity toward the scene of destruction.—As he came near, the youngster said:

"That's dad. Now, you'll see, stranger!"

As soon as the horseman arrived within speaking distance he reined up his horse, and in a cool but earnest manner began his parley.

"Say, cap'n—"

"Well," from Y.

"This mus' stop—hit really mus', stranger. Me an' the neighbors has determined tu stop hit, an' we mean tu do hit."

"Why," said Y., "you don't mean tu resist the United States Government, do you?"

"D—d—the United States Government, stranger," said the indignant Cracker. "What do I keer for the United States Government when my co'n an' tater patch is consarned? Hit hain't no right—it hain't—fur government to eum thru dead-endin', a killin' wif the crops, an' a loadin' of the field wif light'ud, an' a givin' of us fur a month to eum, an' not payin' us a darn cent. I'm a peaceable man, cap'n, but right is right, d—d—it!"

A light suddenly illumined the hitherto blank countenance of Y. In a surprised and indignant tone of voice he inquired who had said that the United States did not pay for damages done to crops.

"Who? Why Jim Darton—a pot-house politician of that neighborhood—'an'—'an'—why, cap'n! you don't mean to say you do pay?" queried the Cracker, quite confused in his elocution.

"Do? Of course we do. And Jim Darton's a liar; and you may tell him so with my compliments."

"Stranger," said the Cracker, riding close up to Y., and speaking in a slow and impressive manner, "do—you—tell me—you—intend—to—pay—me—for—my—damaged—corn—an'—taters—by this hyar line?"

"Certainly I do."

"An' fur the labor hit'll be for me an'

the brats to cut an' roll them trees outen the dead-endin'?"

For answer, Y. coolly pointed to where the negroes, having finished felling in the two fields, were now cutting the logs into cordwood lengths, and piling them outside of the fences—our invariable custom.

"W-a-l," muttered the cracker—"a piling them up for me! An' you'll pay for the damage?"

"Certainly, I'll pay you now, if you'll set a price on it," said Y., "of course, if the price is reasonable."

"Cap'n," said the Cracker, dismounting, "you're a man arter my own heart. Give me your han', hoss! Cash down, eh?"

"Well, now," said Y., after the handshaking had been duly performed, "what should you think the damage to your crop is worth?"

"Dad" stroked his chin gravely. Apparently an idea found it difficult to come through the top-dressing of dirt, bristles, and tobacco juice on his unshaven cheeks, for he transferred his attentions to his head.

"Wa'al, now, cap'n," said he reflectively, "you see thar's a pow'ful heap o' damage done! Thar's hill's o' corn and rows o' taters—no, I mean hills o' taters and rows o' corn—completely mommoxed an' not worth a darn. Thar's the trouble o' splitten all that thar wood. Wa'al it's hard to say."

"Name your price," said Y.

"Wa'al, now," hesitatingly, "don't be close-fisted about it, cap'n. Say now, should you think fifty cents was too much?"

Had it been any one of the party except Y. to whom this exorbitant charge was made, a roar of laughter that would have ended in a fight with the irate Cracker would unquestionably have followed this estimate of damages. Even the imperturbable Y. confessed to me in confidence that he had never before been so tried. He kept his countenance, however, and calmly replied:

"Well, no I shouldn't think that a dollar was too much. But, as we are anxious that the people should be satisfied, I'll give you a couple of dollars and call it square."

So saying, he handed four half dollars to the astonished man.

"By the lord, stranger," said that worthy, when he had satisfied himself that this munificence was real, "you're a right bower full of aces, by gum! Cum down to the pen—its no use, I won't take no denial—cum right down and take a drink of old wum-juice wif me an the neighbors. An' you, Jake, ride your critter down thar, and take mine wif you. Me an' the stranger'll foot it."

So down Y. had to go, and then and there imbibe villainous new whisky with some ten or a dozen of thin, sunburnt, tobacco-stained, reckless-looking fellows, who welcomed him most heartily after hearing 'dad's' story, and who would have so coolly shot him in two minutes if they had been satisfied in their minds that he intended to trample on their rights.

As they parted 'dad' addressed Y.:

"Stran'er," said he, "every' man in Starke county's yer friend; an' if yer want help enny time, let Ben Padgett know. An' if any man ever sez in my hearin' that the United States ain't the best of rulin's, that man's a goin' to git his head broke, or my sinner"—stretching out an arm where the muscles looked like ropes, and I have no doubt felt like iron—"or my sinner's has lost thar cunnin'!"

## Some facts in Natural Science.

According to the French chemist, Lavoisier, the human body exhales about three and one-half pounds of aqueous matter daily. A large cabbage has been forced to exhale twenty ounces of water from its surface.

If the surface of a frog be covered with oil it will speedily die, so important to its existence is the cutaneous respiration. The lungs of a frog can only be filled with air by an action resembling swallowing. Sea-weeds absorb their food by their whole surface, the so-called roots appearing only to serve the purpose of attachments.

The poison of the most venomous serpents may be taken into a healthy stomach without injury, but the smallest portion introduced into the circulating system may produce speedy death.

All food for plants must be so divided as to be able to pass through a cellular membrane. The roots of plants are never provided with open mouths. There is no plant that does not furnish support to some animal.

## California Criminals.

BY A DETECTIVE.

SINCE the recent pardon of Mme. Lacari, convicted of being accessory to the murder of her husband in Visitation Valley, Cal., some points in the case heretofore unknown have been brought out. One of Chief Crowley's detectives tells the following story of the murder and arrest of the criminals:

"Mme. Lacari was a woman you would suspect at a look. On the day of the murder she inveigled her husband into a ride to Visitation Valley. On arriving there, a man stepped from behind a large rock, and after a few moments parley, shot poor Lacari dead, and literally riddled his body with buckshot. The first intimation of the murder by any one, but the actors was the appearance of the wife at an Italian garden, some distance off, where she related the circumstances of her husband's attack and murder by some unknown assassin, and, in proof, led them to the body of the murdered man. When the information was brought to the city, the detective force was immediately set to work to ferret out the case. From several small circumstances, we became convinced that the wife had been instrumental in the murder of her husband, and we held her to await the result of an investigation.

It then transpired that she had been on very intimate terms with one Pizano, and that a boon companion of Pizano's was a villainous looking Italian named Bruzzo. Since the murder neither of them had been seen in their favorite haunts, strengthened the suspicion of their guilt, and a sharp lookout was kept for them.

One night Capt. Lees and myself took a walk down to the Italian portion of San Francisco, and not finding any clue to our men, we were returning to the Hall, when our attention was attracted to the Italian coffee saloon still standing on the corner of Merchant and Sansome streets. Entering, we cast a glance around the room, and fixed on one man who answered the descriptions of Bruzzo. We watched him for awhile, and becoming fully satisfied that we had our man, went to him as he stood at the counter, and in a familiar tone addressed him with, "Hallo Bruzzo!"

He turned and stared at us with a wonderment that we then thought feigned, and jabbered some words in French that were unintelligible to us.

Suddenly he made a grimace, by which we knew that he recognized the name, and in an abstracted manner he kept muttering "Bruzzo, Bruzzo?" and then drawing a letter from his pocket, he answered in broken English:

"Yes, zair, I understand. Bruzzo, he send me dis letter from Sacramento today."

Possessed of this clew we started to Sacramento, and there learned that Bruzzo had left that day by railroad to Placerville. At Placerville we lost all trace of him and were at a halt. While roaming around the place, we ran across Jack Davis, who had robbed Senator Reddington of a lot of valuable jewelry, and arrested him.

While we were in Davis's room we heard a conversation about a man who, from the general way in which he was described, we knew must be Bruzzo. Giving Davis into the custody of the Sheriff of Sacramento, Lees and myself began the tour of examining the groceries and groggeries of the place. Toward evening we entered one of the worst in the town, and calling the landlord aside, informed him of the purpose of our visit, and also intimated that the best thing he could do would be to come out square. He did not attempt any equivocation, but said that Bruzzo had stopped at his house and had left three days before, with a mule train for Virginia City. He also told us that our fugitive had left a trunk behind him, and of this we took possession. In it we found letters which led to the arrest of Pizano, who was hid away in San Francisco. His trail was taken up again, and after several days we arrived at Strawberry Valley, and there learned that Bruzzo had gone ahead, and was by that time near Virginia City.

On the day of our arrival at the latter place, as I was strolling along one of the streets, I turned a corner rather abruptly and went plump against Bruzzo. He did not know me and did not express any surprise, but, as far as I was concerned, I hardly can tell how I felt. In less time than I tell this, I recovered and said:

"How are you, Bruzzo?"

He looked quickly and earnestly at me,

and replied, with the interrogatory of, "Who are you?"

I told him and said he had best come along with me. To conclude, we brought him to San Francisco; he was tried, and with the others was sentenced to the State Prison for life, and with the exception of the woman, they are now at San Quentin.

His confession revealed him to be one of the blackest scoundrels on earth. He said that before coming to this country from Italy he had followed the profession of an assassin, and had put an end to the existence of more than one person, and had been forced to leave by the discovery of one of his crimes. Since he landed in San Francisco, he had kept out of scrapes until Pizano broached the murder of Lacari. He was only offered \$30 at first, but by dint of hard bargaining had run it up \$8 more, and for \$38 he agreed to murder a man who had, as he said, been a warm friend to him.

The plan of ambush was agreed upon, as well as the locality, and on the appointed day he repaired to the "Lone Rock." When the guilty wife and her husband appeared, and had reached a convenient distance, he stepped from his place of concealment, and as he did so, the wife ran from the husband's side. When the unfortunate man saw how he had been betrayed, he began to plead to Bruzzo for his life. Bruzzo stated that he almost yielded, and was about to throw down the gun, when the woman called him a coward, and screamed, "Shoot! shoot! you coward!" And with that he raised the weapon and fired, his victim falling dead with an agonized groan. He said that he was then treated treacherously by Pizano who only paid him twenty-six dollars, and to the end he contended that Pizano was only fit to be hung because he hadn't paid the remaining twelve dollars.

## Girard's Wonderful Dreams.

STEPHEN GIRARD was one of the most remarkable men who ever lived. Philadelphia, the city where he amassed his great fortune in business, was the recipient of his munificent bounty at his death, and his name and memory are well preserved in the Girard College, Girard row, Girard avenue, Girard Bank, Girard Insurance Company, Girard House, etc. At Girard College, where the support and education of some 500 orphan and half orphan boys are provided for, there is a marble statue of Mr. Girard, which represents him with exact fidelity to his appearance in life. He was of short stature a benevolent smile, and a shrewd face. He wore a large, peculiar coat, and his hair was tied in a cue. His whole life was marked by his eccentricities, which in no particular were more observable than in his occasional acts of benevolence.

In his office was a young man as clerk, who attended to his duties very intelligently and faithfully. This had attracted the attention of Mr. Girard, for nothing escaped him. One morning he came into the office, and calling the clerk, remarked:

"Young man, I dreamed of you last night."

"Dreamed of me?" returned the clerk in surprise.

"Yes: I saw a form and heard a voice. The form was your own, and the voice said—'This young man is your best clerk, but he should be a cooper. Merchants fail, but coopers are always sure of a living by their trade.' So you must leave me, and learn to be a first-rate cooper. I never go contrary to my dreams. They often tell me how to proceed. I trust in them as I do my own judgement, and I obey them conscientiously. Go and get a place to learn the trade of a cooper, and when you can make a barrel come and see me again."

The clerk was of course, greatly astonished. But he had no fear of toil, and he knew that he would lose nothing, in any event, by falling in with the directions of Mr. Girard. Accordingly he settled up his affairs in the office, and in a few days engaged with Mr. Girard's cooper to learn the trade. During a long period he kept steadily at work and made excellent progress.

Meanwhile Mr. Girard had not forgotten him.

He often saw the young man in his overalls on the wharves at work, and he always spoke encouragingly to him. He had not made up his mind as to what he would do for him, but he was greatly pleased at the successful carrying out of his dream. On one occasion as he came from the wharf he muttered:—

"My young cooper is doing well. He is a man every inch of him. I must give him a helping hand."

A few nights subsequently the good old man was sleeping calmly in his humble looking apartment. His real wealth did not show itself in anything about him. The furniture was old-fashioned, and the surroundings were strictly after the plain taste of the owner. As he slumbered his countenance was calm, and without the trace of a single care. At times a slight smile flitted over his face, and he seemed to be in a pleasant dream. He slumbers continued for a considerable time, when he suddenly awoke. He rubbed his eyes and then spoke:

"Ha, ha!" he said, "I've had a dream again about my young cooper. I thought that I'd hear something about him again. There is a good spirit looking after his welfare, surely. 'When he finishes his apprenticeship, and is a good cooper, give him twenty thousand dollars to start in business,' whispered the voice in my ear. Of course I will. He is worthy of encouragement. The money will go into good hands. Of course I'll give it to him but in my own way. Ha, ha! I've a plan for that."

Soon the old man dropped into slumber again he had the same calm countenance and the same serene smile. His life was devoid of all evil, and his dreams were of good deeds in store for the future.

Time passed on. One day the young man came into Mr. Girard's office. He was in the garb of a mechanic, and he looked healthful and sinewy from manual labor.

"Good day, Mr. Girard," he said, as the old gentleman turned toward him with a warm greeting; "I have come to tell you that I am a good cooper now. I've served my entire time."

"Can you make a good barrel?"

"As good as any cooper in Philadelphia."

"Make me twenty, and bring them here yourself."

The young man went off, and in an hour was hard at work at the barrels. He was really a superior workman, and when the twenty barrels were completed they were the admiration of all in the shop. When they had been placed in Mr. Girard's he examined every one of them with the closest scrutiny. He looked at the staves, the hoops, the heads, the shape, the cutting and the driving, and in the end remarked to the young cooper who was anxiously waiting for his verdict:—

"They are good barrels. I never saw better. You have learned your trade and done your part faithfully. Come into the counting-room, and I'll now do mine."

The couple went into the office. The old man's face was beaming pleasure and satisfaction, and the young man's was flushed and pale by turns from the peculiar circumstances of the moment. Mr. Girard took down his check book and wrote a check. This he cut out, and then, turning to the young man, said:

"My young friend listen to me. Your fidelity, promptness and energy early attracted my attention. Then I had the dream about you that I mentioned to you a long time ago. You acted with alacrity upon the suggestion made in consequence of that dream, and to-day you stand before me skilled in a trade. I have dreamed of you in the meantime. A good spirit whispered in my ear to give you \$20,000. You have made for me twenty superior barrels for which I will now pay you one thousand each."

Mr. Girard, at this juncture, placed in the hand of the agitated young man the check he had prepared.

"Now," he continued, "you have a capital to commence business as a merchant if you see fit. If disaster should overtake you go to your trade again."

The young man broke forth in a torrent of thanks, but Mr. Girard abruptly stopped him, saying:

"You lose interest on your money while you talk, I have fulfilled my dreams and done justice by you. 'Good morning!'"

Here, this strange interview ended. The young man went away with the deepest gratitude in his heart, and a resolution to make a business worthy of the respect of his generous benefactor. He subsequently became one of the first merchants of Philadelphia. This incident is one of the most singular in the history of Mr. Girard, and no less in the annals of dreams.

It is a curious coincidence that Louis XIV of France took Strasburg by assault from the Germans on the 28th of September, 1681, and that it surrendered to the German forces under General Werder exactly one hundred and eighty-nine years after, on the same day of the month, the 28th of September, 1870.