

A Keeper's Story.

It was in the year 186—, that important business called me from the little town of N—to the city of A—, a journey of about twenty miles.

After supper I drew up the fire to enjoy a smoke with my new friend. As the man lighted his pipe, I noticed a deep scar that extended across his hand.

On my saying that I should like to hear the story, he commenced as follows: "I was formerly a night-watcher in the Insane Asylum over in A—.

Here verdant, who had been gazing intently upon the slim youth, interrupted him with—"No-no, no, I guess not, not to day, any how. I'll go down and see my aunt; and if I conclude to come, I'll come up tomorrow and let you know."

"I know where they put the big carving-knife, and now that I have got the keys, I will get it, and death will be your portion."

"Saying this, he started off, leaving me in the dark. He was a large and powerful man, weighing nearly fifty pounds more than I did, and in his present state a match for two like me.

ed through the grates and with his knife struck me across the hand, while I was removing the key. As he went to draw back his hand, I seized it by the wrist and catching hold of the knife with my wounded hand, wrenched it from him.

A Drug Clerk's Joke.

JEM. B is a wag. A joke to Jem is both food and raiment, and whenever there is an opening for fun, "he goes into" it.

Jem was recently in a drug store when a youth apparently fresh from the "mountain," entered the store, and at once accosted Jem stating that he was in searce of a job.

"What kind of a job?" inquired the wag. "Oh, a'most anything—I want to get a kind of a genteel job: I'm tired o' farnin' an' kin turn my hand to almost anything."

"Well, we want a man—a good, strong healthy man, a sample clerk."

"What's the wages?" "Wages are good; we pay \$1,000 to a man in that situation."

"What's a feller got to do?" "Oh, merely to test medicines, that's all. It requires a stout man, one of good constitution, and after he gets used to it, he doesn't mind it.

"Oh, merely to test medicines, that's all. It requires a stout man, one of good constitution, and after he gets used to it, he doesn't mind it. You see, we are very particular about the quality of our medicines and before we sell any, we test every parcel. You will be required to take—say, six or seven ounces of castor oil some days, with a few doses of rhubarb, aloes, croton oil, and similar preparations.

Here verdant, who had been gazing intently upon the slim youth, interrupted him with—"No-no, no, I guess not, not to day, any how. I'll go down and see my aunt; and if I conclude to come, I'll come up tomorrow and let you know."

He has not yet turned up.

Popping the Question.

The greatest professors who can face the battery of a thousand eyes directed to them on the rostrum are frequently the most diffident of men when taken from their regular sphere of labor.

"I know where they put the big carving-knife, and now that I have got the keys, I will get it, and death will be your portion."

The Canadians are building and have nearly or quite completed a wooden railroad between Sorel and Arthabaska. The track is of the same gauge as that in general use on the Michigan railroads;

The sweetest face is but the cushion that covers a grinning skeleton.

SUNDAY READING.

A Story for Boys.

TWO country lads came at an early hour to a market town, and arranging their little stands, sat down to wait for customers. One was furnished with fruits and vegetables of the boy's own raising, and the other supplied with clams and fish.

"So there is, I think I will not take it. But," he added, looking into the boy's fine, open countenance, "is it not very un-business-like to point out the defects of your goods to customers?"

"It is better than being dishonest, sir," said the boy, modestly.

"You are right, little fellow; always remember that principle, and you will find favor with God and man also; I shall remember your little stand in future. Are these clams fresh?" he continued, turning to Ben, Wilson's stand.

"Yes, sir; fresh this morning, I caught them myself," was the reply, and a purchase being made, the gentleman went away.

"Harry, what a fool you were to show the gentleman that spot in the melon! Now you can take it home for your pains, or throw it away. How much wiser is he about those clams I caught yesterday?"

"Ben, I would not tell a lie or act one either, for twice what I have earned this morning. Besides I shall be better off in the end, for I have gained a customer, and you have lost one."

And so it proved, for the next day the gentleman bought nearly all his fruits and vegetables of Harry, but never spent another penny at the stand of his neighbor. Thus the season passed; the gentleman finding he could always get a good article of Harry, constantly patronized him, and sometimes talked with him a few minutes about his future prospects.

My Daily Occupation.

ON my passage up the Mississippi river from Davenport, I observed a neatly dressed old colored man, whose saintly appearance induced me to accost him with the question: "You are journeying, my friend, to that good land of everlasting rest, are you not?"

"His dull eye kindled, as, looking up, he replied with emphasis: "Dat is my daily occupation."

Satisfied with that comprehensive answer, we conversed together of things of the kingdom, when again I asked: "How did I know you were a Christian? Though a perfect stranger to me, I felt sure you were a disciple of Jesus. How do you think I knew it?"

"You know'd it by de mark," he replied: "De Scriptur' tells ob de saints having a mark in dar foreheads. You know'd it by de mark. And now I tuk you for a young preacher ob de Gospel, and I want to know why, having de Gospel message, you did not preach to us on dis boat?"

Somewhat startled by the suggestion, I replied: "Some of the officers knew I was a minister, and they did not invite me or suggest that it would be agreeable, and I did not wish to appear officious or obtrude my message."

"Ah!" said he, "de old Apostle Paul didn't wait for invitations. Most every body likes to hear de Gospel. 'Twould be no 'trusion (obtrusion), and you might a done much good."

I stood reproved. Never again in this world shall I have the opportunity to address that large company of souls—and I had the words whereby some of them might have been saved. It is no excuse that most other ministers pass *incognita* up and down these rivers. I believe God prompted this humble old disciple to teach me a lesson, which I trust will result in my clearing my skirts from the blood of all men hereafter.—*Christian at Work.*

God's Providence.

A merchant was one day returning from market. He was on horseback and behind him was a valise filled with money. The rain fell with violence, and the good old man was wet to the skin. At this he was vexed, and murmured because God had given him such bad weather for his journey.

He soon reached the border of a thick forest. What was his terror on beholding on one side of the road a robber with

a leveled gun, aiming at him, and attempting to fire! But the powder being wet by the rain, the gun did not go off. And the merchant, giving spurs to his horse, fortunately had time to escape.

As soon as he found himself safe, he said to himself, "How wrong was I not to endure the rain patiently, as sent by Providence. If the weather had been dry and fair, I should not probably be alive at this hour, and my little children would have expected my return in vain. The rain which caused me to murmur, came at a fortunate moment to save my property."

And thus it is with a multitude of our afflictions; by causing us slight and short suffering, they preserve us from others far greater and of longer duration.

A Singular Indian Tradition.

Among the Seminole Indians there is a singular tradition regarding the white man's origin and superiority. They say that when the Great Spirit made the earth he also made three men. All the men had fair complexions; and that after making them he led them to the margin of a small lake, and bade them leap in and wash. One obeyed, and came out purer and fairer than before; the second hesitated a moment, during which the water, agitated by the first had become muddied, and when he bathed he came out copper-colored; the third did not leap till the water had become black with mud and he came out black with its own color.

The Nature of an Oath.

Early in the rebellion, when the Federal forces were stationed at Beaufort, S. C., there was an old darkey by the name of Lige Jackson, who, deserted by his master, was left to take care of himself as best he might. Lige was considered a chattel of weak intellect, and moreover, he was exceedingly awkward in his attempts to play the role of a house servant.

It happened that Lige was a witness in a case that came before a court martial, and being called up to give his testimony, was objected to on the part of the defendant, who stated that he didn't believe the nigger was of sound mind.

"Stand up, Lige," said the court.—"Do you understand the nature of an oath?"

Lige scratched his wool for a moment, and then turning up the whites of his eyes replied:

"Look a year, marse' dis nigger has waited on 'bout haf de ossifers since dey fus cum to dis place, and if he don't understand de nature of an oath by dis time, den dare's no wirtue in cussing."

The court considered Lige a competent witness.

Taxing Them.

The Roman Censor frequently imposed taxes on unmarried men, and men of full age were obliged by law to marry, unless mentally or physically disqualified. The Spartan women at certain games, laid hold of all the old bachelors they could get their hands on, and inflicted on them every mark of infamy and disgrace, dragging them around their altars and handling them very roughly.

One of our vicinity deacons nearly captured five boys who had been devastating his chestnut trees. Sunday afternoon, shaking his fist after their retreating forms he angrily shouted: "The sneaking little devils! if I had hold of 'em one minute I'd—"

We were astonished by a legal gent asking us a few days ago the difference between a pound of meat and a drummer boy, and were still more surprised when told that the only difference was "that the meat weighs a pound while the drummer pounds away. We guess it's so. Don't it?"

Mrs. Barry, of the Boston Children's mission, is said during a year's time to have made 1,591 visits to the poor, to have lined and trimmed 100 hats and bonnets, to have cut out 521 garments, and to have made two visits to another State.

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DR. CROOK'S COMPOUND SYRUP OF POKE ROOT, Cures all Mercurial Diseases.

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