The Independent Republican.

"FREEDOM AND RIGHT AGAINST SLAVERY AND WRONG."

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Select Poetry.

FLOWERS.

BY ELIZABETH OAKES SMITH.

Each leaflet is a tiny scroll,
Inscribed with holy truth,
A lesson that around the heart
Should keep the dew of youth;
Bright missals from angelic throngs
In every by-way left;
How were the earth of glory shorn
Were it of flowers bereft!

They tremble on the Alpine heights,
The fissured rock they press,
The desert wild with heat and sand,
Shares too their blessedness;
And wheresoe'er the weary heart
Turns in its dim despair,
The meek-eyed blossom upward looks,
Inviting it to prayer!

The Star and the Water-Lily.

BY O. W. HOLMES.

The sun stepped down from his golden throne
And lay in the silent sea,
And the Lily had folded her satin leaves,
For a sleepy thing was she.
What is the Lily dreaming of?
Why crisp the waters blue?
See, see! she is lifting her varnished lid,
Her white leaves are glittering through?

The Rose is cooling his burning cheek
In the lap of the breathless tide;
The Lily hath sisters both fresh and fair,
That would lie by the Rose's side;
He would love her better than all the rest,
And he would be fond and true:
But the Lily unfolded her weary lids,
And looked at the sky so blue.

"Remember, remember, thou silly one,
How fast will thy Summer glide!
And wilt thou wither a virgin pale,
Or flourish a blooming bride?"
"O the Rose is old, and thorny and cold,
And lives on the earth," said she;
"But the Star is fair, and he lives in the air,
And he shall my bridegroom be."

"But what if the stormy cloud shall come,
And ruffle the silver sea?
Would he turn his eye from the distant sky
To smile on a thing like thee?
O no, fair Lily he will not send
One ray from his far-off throne;
The winds shall blow and the waves shall flow,
And thou wilt be left alone.

"There is not a leaf on the mountain top,
Nor a drop of evening dew,
Nor a golden sand on the sparkling shore,
Nor a pearl in the waters blue,
That he has not cheered with his fickle smile,
And warmed with his faithless beam;
And will he be true to a pallid flower
That floats on a quiet stream?"

Alas for the Lily! she would not heed,
But turned to the skies afar,
And bared her breast to the trembling ray
That shot from the rising star.
The cloud came over the darkened sky
And over the waters wide;
She looked in vain through the beating rain,
And sank in the stormy tide.

Tales and Sketches.

"ANGELINA'S FAINTED."

The talk was of Hottentots—

'Don't speak of 'em,' cried Miss Angelina Daffy. 'I'm certain of it—if I were only to look at a Hottentot, I should faint—I must faint.'

'Fiddledee,' said Miss Lillywhite; and there was a hush—a pause in the conversation; for when Miss Lillywhite exclaimed 'Fiddledee,' it behooved thoughtless young ladies to look to themselves. Now, Miss Daffy had a great talent for fainting. Perhaps the talent was originally a natural gift; nevertheless it could not be denied that a frequent and earnest cultivation of the endowment had brought it to perfection. Miss Daffy, at one minute's notice, could faint at any time, and upon any subject. She could faint at either extreme of the day—faint at breakfast or faint at supper; could faint with equal beauty and truthfulness, whether the matter to be fainted upon were a black beetle, or a blackbird—a bull, or a bullfinch.—She had wonderful powers of syncope; tho', it must be allowed, like most folks haunted with a despotic sense of their own genius, she now and then employed it a little out of place. Vanity, however, is a human weakness. For a philosopher, to his own satisfaction, has proved that the peacock takes no pride in its own effulgent glories, but, all unconscious of their beauty, spreads them because it was ordained to do so; and after all, had Miss Daffy been philosophically examined upon her proneness to faint, she would have attributed the habit to no self-complacency, but to the simple but inevitable truth that she was made to faint. She would not have recognized any beauty in the art of fainting, but merely the natural consequence that to faint was feminine. Eve, she thought, was made for *sal volatile*.

Miss Lillywhite was a spinster of seven-and-forty. 'I am six—seven—eight-and-forty, next birth-day,' Miss Lillywhite would blithely observe, as the year might be. And this gay veracity was the more pleasing in Miss Lillywhite, inasmuch as she might have passed for forty; nay, had she stickled ever so little for it, she might have got off with six-and thirty at most—a happy, blooming six-and thirty; for Miss Lillywhite, like a true English woman, carried in her unfading beauty the assertion of her British race.—How much triumphant beauty all over the world fades and yields as teens blow into twenties, and twenties wrinkle into thirties! Now your truly beautiful English woman, with her carnations and lilies, will carry her colors up two score and ten. Nay, we have known some veterans, blooming with a sprinkling of years over tyrannous fifty. And Miss Lillywhite was jocund as she was handsome. It is said there is no better preservative against the melancholy changes wrought by time than honey. We know not whether Miss Lillywhite was acquainted with the Egyptian truth; if not, she had unconsciously acted upon the unknown recipe, and had preserved herself in the sweetness of her disposition—in the honey of her goodness. She was a pattern old maid. Yet a pattern, we would hope, never to be followed; for it is such women who make the real wives and mothers. Miss Lillywhite, like Miss Venus de Medicis, should remain a single perfection; alone in sweetness and beauty, to show what celibacy and art can do; to be admired as samples, but never to be added to.

Miss Lillywhite was an old school-fellow of Mrs. Daffy's, and was passing the Christmas-time with her early friend and family. Now Angelina Daffy—a pretty creature, with more goodness in her than she dreamt of—had, as we have indicated, this weakness, she must faint; and carrying out this will, as a first principle, she had duly fainted through the whole round of the holidays. She had fainted at snap-dragons on Christmas-eve—and under the mistletoe on Christmas-day—fainted when the bells rang in 1850—and fainted, dead as a stone, as a nervous guest declared, when prevailed upon to crack a *bonbon* on Twelfth-night. 'Angelina's fainted!' had become household words in the homestead of the Daffys.

And so, can it be wondered at that the ingenious Miss Lillywhite, at this last threat of Angelina's, to faint at a Hottentot—should rebuke the maiden with more than ordinary vivacity? The truth is, Miss Lillywhite had been much provoked; even on the previous Sunday, when Angelina had menaced to faint at the clergyman—a very handsome, meek young man, who preached a maiden sermon with great promise of preferment—Miss Lillywhite could only scold the maiden into firmness, by threatening to give her up, unattended, to the beadle. Therefore, when Angelina, returning to her weakness, expressed herself ready to go off at the very look of a Hottentot—therefore, all previous provocation considered, can it be wondered at that the patience of Miss Lillywhite fairly exploded with—'Fiddledee!' We think not, and take up the stich of our story.

Miss Angelina looked surprised—amazed—and gradually became very deeply wounded. At first, she raised her eyes towards Miss Lillywhite as though doubtful of the truth of her impressions; but the set, stern features of Miss Lillywhite—if you can couple the expression of sternness with the thought of a clear, bright, open face, bright and clear as Dresden china—convinced Angelina that it was the lady visitor who had really spoken. What, under the new and painful circumstance, could Angelina do? Why, she fell back upon the strength of her weakness; she instantly made an ostentatious preparation to faint. Her eyelids were slightly tremulous—she swallowed one sob—her neck took one swan-like curve, and—and, in another second, there would have been the old, old cry of the house of Duffy—'Angelina's fainted!'

But—

Miss Lillywhite jumped from her chair, and resolutely passing Mrs. Duffy, made direct to the sufferer, who, half conscious of the attempted rescue, was fainting all the faster. 'Angelina,' cried Miss Lillywhite, with a restorative shake, 'this is affectation—folly—hypocrisy—nonsense!'

Miss Angelina Daffy opened her orbs, and in a moment sat upright, with her pretty cut nostril dilated, and the tear that was coming into her astonished eyes almost frozen, and, indeed, altogether in such a state of amazement that she must—no, she would not faint; it was not a time to faint, when so cruelly offended.

Miss Lillywhite drew her chair beside Angelina, who was every moment hardening in dignity. 'My dear child,' said Miss Lillywhite, 'you must give up fainting—it's gone out of fashion.'

'Fashion, Miss Lillywhite! Do you think that feelings'—

'Fiddledee,' again repeated Miss Lillywhite; and Angelina sternly resolved not to say another word to so strange a person—to so unpolite a visitor. Angelina crossed her arms in resignation, determining—since her mamma would not interfere—to suffer in silence. Miss Lillywhite might be rude—might say her worst.

'When I was eighteen, your age,' said Miss Lillywhite, 'and that, my dear, is nearly thirty years ago, I used to faint too. I enjoyed fainting very much; indeed, my dear, I question if ever you take greater pleasure in fainting than I did.

'Pleasure!' exclaimed Miss Angelina.—Who *could* remain dumb under such an imputation?

'O, I know all about it—pleasure, my dear,' said the remorseless Miss Lillywhite. 'You see it gave me a little consequence; it drew upon me general notice; it made me, as it were, the centre of a picture; and it *was* a pleasure—not a healthful one, certainly, but still a pleasure—to enjoy so much sympathy about one. To hear, whilst I was in a fit—I don't know, my dear, whether you hear when fainting, quite as well as I did—to hear expressions of concern, and pity, and admiration, and do you hear them distinctly?' Angelina could not answer such a question; she could only look lightning—harmless summer lightning—at Miss Lillywhite, who inexorably continued. 'I can confess it now, I used to enjoy the excitement, and therefore went off upon every reasonable opportunity. It was very wrong, but there *was* something pleasant, exciting in the words, 'Miss Lillywhite's fainted.' O I can remember them, my dear, as though it was only yesterday.—But, my love,' said the cruel spinster, taking the young maid's hand between her own, and looking so benignly, and speaking so sweetly—'but, my love, we may faint once too often.'

Angelina was very much offended—deeply hurt that Miss Lillywhite should for a moment associate her own past affectation with the real existing weakness then and there before her. Nevertheless there was such quietness, such truthfulness, and withal, such an air of whim in the looks, and words, and manner of the elderly spinster, that the young one gradually resigned herself to her monitress.

'We may faint once too often,' repeated Miss Lillywhite, and she sighed; and then her customary smile beamed about her.—'Of this dreary truth I am a sad example.'

'You! Miss Lillywhite!' said Angelina.

'Listen,' said the old maid. ''Tis a short story, but worth your hearing. When I was nineteen, I was about to be married. About, did I say? Why, the day was fixed; I was in my bridal dress; at the altar; the ring, the wedding ring, at the very tip of my finger, when'——

'Mercy me!' cried Angelina, 'what happened?'

'I fainted,' said Miss Lillywhite, and she shook her head, and a wan smile played about her lips.

'And you were not married because you fainted?' said Angelina, much awakened to the subject.

'As I have confessed, it was my weakness to faint upon all occasions. I enjoyed the interest that, as I thought, fainting cast about me. My lover often looked coldly—suspiciously; but love conquered his doubts, and led him triumphantly before the parson.—Well, the marriage service was begun, and'—

'Do go on,' cried Angelina.

'And in a few minutes I should have been a wife, when I thought I must faint. It would seem very bold of me in such a situation not to faint. I, who had fainted on so many occasions, not to swoon at the altar would have been a want of sentiment—of proper feeling, on so awful an an occasion. With this thought I felt myself fainting rapidly; and just as the bridegroom had touched my finger with the ring, I went off; yes, my dear, swooned with all the honors.'

'Do go on,' again cried Angelina.

'As I swooned the ring slipt from the bridegroom's fingers, fell upon the stove, and was rolling—rolling—to drop through the aperture of the stove that from below, admitted heat to the church, when—though swooning—I somehow saw the danger, and to stop the ring, put forth my foot'—

'Well!' exclaimed Angelina.

'Too late—the ring rolled on—disappeared down the chimney of the stove—and then I fainted with the greatest fidelity. Hartshorn and *sal volatile* came to my aid. I was restored—but where was the ring? 'Twas hopeless to seek for it. Half-a-dozen other rings were proffered; but no—it would be an evil omen—there would be no happiness if I were not wedded with my own ring.—Well, search was made and time flew, and we were late at church to begin with—the ring was not found when the church clock struck twelve.'

'Well!' said Angelina.

'Well!' sighed Miss Lillywhite, 'the clergyman closing his book, said, 'It is passed the canonical hour; the parties cannot be married to day; they must come again to-morrow.'

'Dreadful!' exclaimed Angelina.

'We returned home; my lover upbraided—I retorted; we had a shocking quarrel and—and he left the house to write me a farewell letter. In a week he was on his voyage to India; in a twelvemonth he had married an Indian lady, rich as an idol, and I—after thirty years—am still Caroline Lillywhite, spinster.'

It is very strange. From the time of the above narrative there were two words never again breathed beneath the roof-tree of the Daffys. And these unuttered words were—

'Angelina's fainted!'

ANNUAL FESTIVAL.

AT ST. PATRICK'S WELLS, COUNTY DOWN, IRELAND.

"When or how the custom which I shall describe originated, I know not, nor, is it necessary to inquire; but every midsummer eve, thousands of Roman Catholics, many from distant parts of the country, resort to these celebrated holy wells to cleanse their souls from sin, and clear their mortal bodies of disease. The influx of people of different ranks for some nights before the one in which alone during the whole year, these wells possess this power (for on all other days and nights in the year they rank not above common draw-wells,) is prodigious; and their attendant hordes of beggars, whose ragged garments, if once taken off, could not be put on again by the ingenuity of man, infest the streets and lanes, and choose their lodgings in the highways and hedges. Having been previously informed of the approach of this miraculous night, and having made ourselves acquainted with the locality of the wells, early in the evening we had repaired ourselves to the spot; we had been told that we should see something quite new to us, and we met with what is scarcely credible on occular evidence. The spot on which this scene of superstitious folly was exhibited, was admirably adapted to heighten every attendant circumstance of it; the wonderful wells, of which there are four, being situated in a square or patch of ground, surrounded by steep rocks, which reverberated every sound and redoubled all the confusion. The coup d'oeil of the square on our approach presented a floating mass of various colored heads, and our ears were astonished with confused and mingled sounds of mirth and sorrow, of frantic enthusiastic joy, and deep despending savings. On descending into the square we found ourselves immediately in the midst of innumerable groups of these fanatics, running in all directions, confusedly, in appearance, but methodically, as we afterwards found in reality;—the men and the women were barefooted, and the heads of all were bound round with handkerchiefs. Some were running in circles, some were kneeling in groups, some were singing in wild concert, some were jumping about like maniacs at the end of an old building, which, we were told, was the ruins of a chapel erected, with several adjacent buildings, in one miraculous midsumer's night by the tutelary saint of the wells, of whose talent as a mason they give, it must be confessed, no very exalted opinion.—When we had somewhat recovered from the first surprise which the (to us) unaccountable fantastic actions of the crowd had given us, we endeavored to trace the progress of some of these deluded votaries, through all the mazes of their mystic penance. The first object of them all appeared to be the ascent of the steepest and most rugged part of the rock, up which both men and women crawled their painful way on their hands and bare knees. The men's clothes were all made so as to accommodate their knees with all the sharpness of the pointed rock; and the poor women many of them young and beautiful, took incredible pains to prevent their petticoats from affording any defence against its torturing asperities. Covered with dust and perspiration, and blood, they at last reached the summit of the rock, where in a rude sort of chair hewn out of the stone, sat an old man, probably one of their priesthood, who seemed to be the representative of Saint Patrick, and the high priest of this religious frenzy. In his hat each of the penitents deposited a half-penny, after which he turned them around a certain number of times, listened to the long catalogue of their offences, and dictated to them the penance they were to undergo or perform. Then they descended the rock by another path, but in the same manner and posture, equally careful to be cut by the flints, and to suffer as much as possible; this was, perhaps, more painful travelling than the ascent had been—the suffering knees were rubbed another way—every step threatened a tumble; and if anything could have been lively there, the ridiculous attitudes of these descenders would have made us so. When they gained the foot of the hill they (most of them) bestowed a small donation of charity upon some miserable groups of supplicants who were stationed there. One beggar, a cripple, sat on the ground, at one moment addressing the crowd behind him, and swearing that all the Protestants ought to be burnt out of the country, and in the same breath, begging the penitents to give him one half-penny for the love of '*swate blessed Jasus*.' The penitents now returned to the use of their feet and commenced a running, sort of Irish jiggish walk round several cairns or heaps of stones erected at different spaces; this lasted for some time. Suddenly they would prostrate themselves before the cairn and ejaculate some hasty prayers, as suddenly they would rise and resume their mill-horse circumrotation. Their eyes were fixed; their looks spoke anxiety, almost despair; and the operation of their faculties seemed totally suspended. They then proceeded to one end of the old chapel, and seemed to believe that there was a virtue, unknown to us heretics, in *one particular stone* of the building, which every one was careful to touch with the right hand; those who were short, left no mode of jumping unpractised to accomplish it. But the most remarkable, and doubtless the most efficient of the ceremonies, was reserved for the last; and surely nothing was ever devised by man which more forcibly evinced how low our nature can descend.

Around the largest of the wells, which was in a building very much, to common eyes, like a stable, those who had performed their penances, were assembled, some dressing, some undressing, many *stark-naked*. A certain number of them were admitted at a time into this holy well, and there men and women of every age bathed promiscuously without any covering. They undressed before bathing, and performed the whole business of the toilet afterwards in the open air, in the midst of the crowd, without appearing sensible of the observations of lookers-on, perfectly regardless of decency, perfectly dead to all natural sensations. This was a strange sight, but so nearly resembling the feast of lunaties, that even the voluptuary would have beheld it without any emotions but those of dejection. The penance having terminated in this marvelous ablution, the penitents then adjourned either to booths and tents to drink or to join their friends. The air then rang with musical monotonous singing, which become louder with every glass of whisky, finishing in frolicksome debauch, and laying, in all probability, the foundation for future penances and more thorough ablutions. No pen can describe all the confusion, no description can give a just idea of the noise and disorder which filled this *hallowed* square, this theatre of fanaticism, this temple of superstition, of which the rites rival all that we are told of in the East. The minor parts of the spectacle were filled up with credulous mothers, half drowning their poor children to cure their sore eyes; with cripples who exhibited every thing that has yet been discovered in deformity, expecting to be washed straight, and to walk away nimble and comely.

"The experience of years had not shaken their faith; and though nobody was cured, no body went away doubting. Snouting and howling and swearing and carousing filled up every pause, and 'threw o'er this spot of earth the air of hell.' I was never more shocked and struck with horror; and perceiving many of them intoxicated with religious fervor, and all-potent whisky, and warming into violence before midnight, at which time the distraction was at its climax, I left this scene of human degradation in a state of mind not easily to be described.—The whole road from the wells to the neighboring town was crowded with such supplicants as preferred mortal half-pence to holy penance. The country around was illuminated with watch-fires; the demons of discord and fear were absorbed in the air; the pursuits of the world, and the occupations of the peaceful, appeared put a stop to by the performance of ceremonies, disgraceful when applied to propitiate an all-compassionate Divinity, whom these religionists were determined and taught to consider jealous rather than merciful. I wish it were in my power, without insincerity, to pay a compliment to the Irish Catholic clergy. On this occasion they were the mad priests of these Bacchanalian orgies; the fomentors of fury; the setters-on to strife; the mischievous ministers of the debasement of their people, lending their aid to plunge their credulous congregations in ceremonious horrors."

Nice Members of Congress.

The senior editor of the Louisville Journal was in Washington for some weeks previous to the recent adjournment of Congress. He gives the following:

A couple of merry fellows, one of them a distinguished member of Congress from a Southern State, and the other, a distinguished ex-editor from Kentucky, concocted a letter purporting to be addressed by a young lady to a very fine-looking gentleman.—It was got up in first-rate style. The pretended lady set forth therein, that she had several times seen the gentleman she was addressing, that she was captivated by his fine face and manly form, that her heart was deeply touched by all she saw and heard of him, and that she *must* make his acquaintance before his departure from the city; that she hoped and prayed he would forgive her seeming boldness, as it was the first imprudent act of her life; she had always moved and was still moving in the highest circles of the capital, that she would be upon a certain street at precisely 12 o'clock on the following day, in a dress which she described with great particularly, and that she hoped and trusted he would meet her and thus afford her an opportunity of a brief personal intercourse with the idol of her heart.

The two wags had between thirty and forty copies of this letter written by a female friend of theirs, and they sent these copies to between thirty and forty members of Congress, selecting those of course who were well known to entertain a very exalted opinion of their personal fascinations.

Everything being thus arranged, the two jokers called upon us and another young gentleman, explained what they had done, and invited us to get into their carriage, ride with them to the point of assignation and see the sights. We unhesitatingly consented, and we saw sights sure enough. Riding upon the designated square, we beheld the whole thirty or forty members, Northern men and Southern men, Whigs, Democrats and Know Nothings, walking to and fro, all gazing in every direction and at every female figure to discover the object of their anxious search.

We concluded that if a few more copies of the letter had been sent to members of the House of Representatives, the House would have had to adjourn for the want of a quorum.

THE SPIRITS IN THE WOODS.

BY A BACKWOODSMAN.

Table-moving was first tried by all placing our hands in a ring, upon the table. The effect was almost instantly seen. Our own weight could not hold the table down to the floor. Slowly it raised, but tipping a little, we fell headlong into the pancake-batter, the table and batter rising as we went down. J. would have laughed at our fall, had not H. trod hardly upon his corns. Instead of laughing, he looked like cursing. H. was grave, and declared that the spirits compelled him to step where he did. It was evident that we had 'got up the Dutch' of our unseen visitors. Wishing to get at a good understanding with them, we preposed to learn, by rapping, a variety of matters particularly interesting, and at the same time, test by mental questions and otherwise, their spiritual intelligence and veracity. Perhaps I cannot do better than to give the questions and answers as they occurred.

'Are the spirits present?'

'They am, sir.'

'How many of them?'

'More'n you all can shake sticks at.'

'Are they good spirits?'

'Fourth-proof, and no mistake.'

'From what sphere?'

'The top notch.'

'Will they converse with us?'

'Well they will, hosses.'

[These replies were rapped out as we drew our finger over the letters of the alphabet. Verbal questions were first asked by different members of the 'circle.']

'Will any spirit called for, appear and answer?'

'*Sa-a-tain!*'

'Is Cain present?'

'He happens to be!'

'Was the club with which he slew Abel, hickory or white ash, and what did he cut it with?'

'Yes, 'twant either. It was a 'shoemake' ball-club, cut with a butcher-knife.'

[This important question settled, Cain stood aside, and Belshazzar was called.]

'Do you remember the feast when the hand-writing appeared on the wall?'

'I make out to!'

'Were you—begging pardon, sir—under the influence of intoxicating liquors that evening?'

'*Drunk*, gentlemen, as a bil'd owl.'

'Drink champaigne, or Monongahela?'

'Neither. Owing to the scarcity of logwood, we went it on black-strap and clear rotgut.'

'Any of the women tipsy?'

'They want nothing else, I reckon! Mrs. Belshazzar was so limber-like that in playing snap-and-catch'em,' she fell into the oyster kettle and broke a turtle-shell comb all to smash.'

'Was it fright that made your knees smite together?'

'No, *sir*. I was so almighty [illegible] to keep 'em from smiting together, nohow.'

'Was Cyrus one of the boys?'

'Well, no great scratch. He took the advantage of us when we were on a bender. He was a cold water fanatic and an enemy to the constitution.'

'Are you now in favor of the Maine Law?'

'Not—by-a-jug-full!'

'Do you get anything to take' where you are?'

'Not a drop. I've got a thundering hankering for a 'snifter.'

'Help yourself to the cold water on the table, old boy!'

'Go to the devil with your cold water!'

'Is Balaam present?'

'What do you want of Balaam?'

'How old was that jackass of his'n?'

'He would have been 'four year old' the next general training.'

'Are there any jackasses in your sphere, Mr. Balaam?'

'*No*, you impudent puppies! The jackasses are all on earth yet.'

[This ill-natured insinuation was received with enthusiastic raps by the spirits.]

'Is the boss builder of the Tower of Babel present?' now enquired one of the company.

'He am.'

'Was the tower built of brick, or stone?'

'Brick.'

'How many thousand of brick was in the concern?'

'An almighty heap on 'em, you'd better believe!'

'How much did they cost per thousand?'

'Four dollars and a half at the kiln.'

'How many Irishman did it take to carry 'mort?'

'Nine millions and rising.'

[That's a lie I know! muttered H. A sharp rap on his sore shin under the table, made him painfully aware that the foreman of Babel was around.] The inquiries were continued:

"*Was* there any confusion of languages among the workmen?"

"Considerable, I must admit—a perfect hellabaloo."

"What did the King say when he examined into the matter?"

"*Nix for stay*——!"

"One thing more Mr.—Mr.—What's your name—"

"Well, Mr. Smith—one thing more.—Was it true that Nebuchadnezzar was made to mix clay on the sweep."

"True, and a thundering good ox he was too! He ground all the clay for the Tower of Babel!"

"Did he have brass knobs on his horns?"

He hadn't no horns—he was a *muley!*"

"Was he a——"

"Go to thunder! I won't have any thing more to say to you."

"Was he a short-horned Durham or Devonshire?"

[No answer. The foreman of the Tower of Babel had evidently, believing himself quizzed, gone off in a "huff." Yet J. flattered himself that valuable information had been pumped out of him, information which would be of incalculable good to the spiritual interest of the world. Noah was now called and found to be present.]

'Were you Commodore of that old craft called Ark!'

'I was.'

'Was there much of a shower about those days!'

'Shower! my dear sir—it poured like blazes.'

'What flag did you sail under, English or French?'

'Dutch.'

'Who was pilot?'

'Christopher Columbus.'

'How many animals had you on board?'

'Several hundred, besides the one that draw bored the hen-coop.'

'Any Know Nothings among them?'

'Not a Know Nothing—they were all drowned.'

'Was it true that Belshazzar hailed you on a Life Preserver, and told you to go to thunder with your old tub—guess there won't be much of a shower.'

'He did.'

'Why didn't you take him in?'

'He was taken in a few minutes after that—all over.'

'Had you any of Barnum's Fire Annihilators on board!'

'Some two or three hundred of them, just to put out the candles at night.'

'One more question, Commodore Noah.—What became of the dove which went out and never returned?'

'Some snipe hunters on Mt. Ararat shot it!'

'Are Joe P——'s doves chickens of the one shot?'

'So said to be—this explains why they are sometimes shot.'

'Was there any wharf on Mt. Ararat?'

'Nothing but a white oak snubbing-post and a Yankee grocery.'

'Was the Yankee there himself?'

'Yes, sat there on a herring-box, whittling.'

'What did he say when you hove in sight?'

'H-a-l-l-oo! what craft is that? Been looking for ye this few days, by goll! Say now spose ye don't want to buy any hams nor Weathersfield onyuns, nor nothing, dew ye, old feller?'

PETER FRANCISCO.

The Samson of the Western Hemisphere.

As late as the year 1836, there lived in Western Virginia, a man whos strength was so remarkable, as to win him the title of the 'Western Samson.' He knew nothing of his birth or parentage, but supposed he was born in Portugal, from whence he was stolen when a child, and carried to Ireland. His earliest recollections were those of boyhood in the latter country. While yet a lad, he apprenticed himself to a sea captain, for seven years, in pay for a passage to this country. On his arrival, his time and services were sold to a Mr. Winston of Virginia, in whose service he remained until the breaking out of the Revolution. Being of an adventurous turn of mind, he sought and obtained permission of his master to join the army, and was engaged in active service during the whole contest. Such was his strength and personal bravery, that no enemy could resist him. He wielded a sword, the blade of which was five feet in length, as though it had been a feather, and every one who came in contact with him paid the forfeit of his life. At Stoney Point he was one of the 'forlorn hope' which was advanced to cut away the abatis, and next to Major Gibbon, Brandywine and Germantown, he [illegible] the first [illegible] to enter the works. At most fearless bravery, and nothing but his inability to write, prevented his promotion to a commission. Transferred to the South, he took part in most of the engagements in that section, and towards the close of the war, he was engaged in a contest which exhibited in a striking manner, his self-confidence and courage.

One day while reconnoitering, he stopped at the house of a man by the name of W——, to refresh himself. Whilst at the table he was surprised by nine British troopers, who rode up to the house and told him he was their prisoner. Seeing that he was greatly outnumbered, he pretended to surrender, and the dragoons seeing he was apparently very peacefully inclined, after disarming him, allowed him considerable freedom, while they sat down to partake of the food which he had left when disturbed. Wandering out into the door-yard he was accosted by the Paymaster, who demanded of him everything of value about him, at the risk of his life, in case of refusal. 'I have nothing to give,' said Francisco' 'so use your pleasure.' 'Give up those massive silver buckles in your shoes,' said the dragoon. 'They were the gift of a friend, replied Francisco, 'and give them to you I never shall; take them if you will, you have the power, but I never will give them to any one.'

Putting his sabre under his arm, the soldier stooped down to take them. Francisco seeing the opportunity, which was too good to be lost, seized the sword, and drawing it with force from under the arm of the soldier, dealt him a severe blow across the skull.—Although severely wounded, yet being a brave man, the dragoon drew a pistol and aimed at his antagonist, who was too quick for him, however, and as he pulled the trigger, a blow from the sword nearly severed the wrist, and placed him *hors de combat*. The report of the pistol drew the other dragoons into the yard, as well as W., who very ungenerously brought out a musket, which he handed to one of the soldiers, and told him to make use of it. Mounting the only horse they could get at, he presented the muzzle at the breast of Francisco, and pulled the trigger. Fortunately it missed fire, and Francisco, closed in upon him. A short struggle ensued, which ended in his disarming and wounding the soldier. Tarleton's troop of four hundred men were now in sight, and the other dragoons were about to attack him. Seeing his case was desperate, he turned toward an adjoining thicket, and as if cheering on a party of men he cried out, 'Come on my brave boys, now's your time; we will soon despatch these few, and then attack the main body!' at the same time rushing at the dragoons with the fury of an enraged tiger.

They did not wait to engage him, but fled precipitately to the troop, panic-struck and dismayed. Seizing upon the traitorous villain W—— Francisco was about to despatch him, but he begged and plead so hard for his life, that he forgave him, and told him to secrete for him the eight horses which the soldiers had left behind them. Perceiving that Tarleton had despatched two other dragoons in search of him, he made off into the adjoining wood and while they stopped at the house he, like an old fox, doubled upon their rear, and successfully evaded their vigilance. The next day he went to W—— for his horses, who demanded two of them for his services and generous intentions. Finding his situation dangerous, and surrounded by enemies, where he should have found friends, Francisco was compelled to make the best of it, and left with six horses, intending to revenge himself upon W—— at a future time; "but," as he said, "Providence ordained that I should not be his executioner, for he broke his neck by a fall from one of these very horses."

Many other anecdotes are told of Francisco, illustrative of his immense strength and personal prowess. At Camden, where Gates was defeated, he retreated, and after running along some distance, he sat down to rest himself. He was suddenly accosted by a British dragoon, who presented a pistol and demanded his immediate surrender. His gun being empty, he feigned submission, and said he would surrender, at the same time remarking that his gun was of no further use to him, he presented it sideways to the trooper, who in reaching for it threw himself off his guard, when Francisco, quick as thought, run him through with the bayonet, and as he fell from his horse, he mounted him and continued his retreat. Overtaking his commanding officer, Colonel Mayo, of Powhatton, he gave him up the animal, for which act of generosity the Colonel afterwards presented him with a thousand acres of land in Kentucky.

The following anecdote exemplifying his peaceful nature and his strength, is also told of Francisco. How true it is, we cannot say but we tell it as it was told to us, many years ago, while he was still living in Buckingham county Virginia.

One day while working in his garden, he was accosted by a stranger, who rode up to the fence and inquired of him if he knew 'where a man by the name of Francisco lived?'

Raising himself from his work, and eyeing his interrogator, who appeared to be one of the 'half-horse-half-alligator' breed of Kentuckians, he replied, 'Well, stranger, I don't know of any other person by that name in these parts but myself.'

'Well, I reckon you ain't the man I want. I want to find the great fighting man I've heard tell so much about. The fellow they say can whip all creation and Kaintuck to boot.'

'I can't tell you, stranger, where you'll find that man, I don't know such a man,' said Francisco, resuming his work as a hint to the other that the conference was ended. But the Kentuckian was not to be bluffed off, as he would term it. 'Look 'ere, stranger,' said he, returning to the charge, 'what might your given name be?' 'My name is Peter Francisco, at your service.'

'Ah!' returned the other, 'you're just the man I want to find,' at the same time riding inside the fence, he dismounted and tied his animal—a rough ungainly Indian pony—to one of the posts.

'My name is Big Bill Stokes, all the way from Old Kentuck. I am the Kentucky game chicken, I am. I can out-run, out-hop, out-jump, knock down, drag out, and whip any man in all them diggins. So, as I hearn tell of a fellow down hereabouts who could whip all creation, I thought I'd saddle old Blossom and just ride over and see what stuff he's made of, and here I am. And now, stranger, I'm most starved for a fight, and I'm bound It's all in good feeling you know, and if you lick me, why I'm satisfied, but——'

'Stop a minute, stranger,' said Francisco, 'you've mistaken the man entirely; I'm no fighting man at all, and if I was, I've nothing against you to fight about.'

'Well, I don't know; is there any other Peter Francisco in these parts?'

'No, not that I know of.'

'Well, then, you're the man, and you *must* fight. I've come all the way from Old Kentuck, and I ain't a-going back without knowin which is the best man.'

'But I won't fight. I've got nothing to fight about, and I tell you I *won't fight*.'

'Darn'd if you shan't fight, stranger—I'm bound to lick you if I can; if I don't, you must lick me.'

By this time Francisco had become angry at the importunity of his visitor, and determined to put an end to the scene. Seizing his antagonist therefore by the seat of his buckskin breeches, and the collar of his hunting shirt, he threw him over the fence into the road; then walking leisurely to where his pony was tied, he unfastened him and taking him up by main strength, threw him after his discomfitted rider.

The Kentuckain raised himself from the ground, perfectly dumb-founded by such an exhibition of strength, and after rubbing his eyes as though he thought he might not have seen clearly, he mounted his pony, remarking, 'Well, stranger, I reckon you'll do. I reckon it's about time for me to make tracks. If anybody asks you about that great fight, you can tell 'em you licked Bill Stokes most confoundedly.'

Francisco was a powerfully built man, standing six feet and one inch in height, and weighing 260 pounds. His muscular system was extraordinarily developed, and he had been known to shoulder with ease, a cannon weighing eleven hundred pounds; and a gentleman of undoubted veracity, still living in Virginia, who knew him well, says, 'he could take me in his right hand and pass over the room with me, playing my head against the ceiling as though I had been a doll baby.—My weight was 195 pounds.' His wife, who was a woman of good size, and fair proportions, he would take in his right hand, and holding her out at arm's length, would pass around the room with her, and carry her up and down stairs in that position. He would take a barrel of cider by the chimes, and holding it to his mouth, would drink from the bung, a long and hearty draught without any apparent exertion.

Yet, with all his strength, he was a very peacefully disposed man, and never made use of his power, except in case of necessity about his usual vocations, or in defence of the right. On occasions of out-breaks at public gatherings, he was better at rushing in and preserving the public peace than all the conservative authorities on the ground. Although uneducated, he was a man of strong natural sense, and of a kind, amiable disposition. He was withal a companionable man, and his anecdotes and stories of the war, of which he possessed a rich fund, rendered him a welcome guest in the first families of the State. His industrious and temperate habits together with his kind disposition, made him many friends, and through their influence he was appointed Sergeant-at-arms of the Virginia House of Delegates, in which service he died in 1836, and was buried with military honors in the public burying-ground at Richmond.