

Independent Republican

"FREEDOM AND RIGHT AGAINST SLAVERY AND WRONG."

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THE OLD HOMESTEAD.

BY IDA LAYTON.
I came at eve, as the wind it moan
Sighed plaintive to the linden leaves,
And softly wailed o'er the old door-stone,
Or sobbed beneath the mossy eaves.
My heart beat fast, as I crossed the sill
And stood within the damp old hall,
For had the clock of the old stone mill
Was heard above the waterfall.
Ah! at that sound how old memories stirred:
Ain't, a gladness, romping boy,
With heart as free as a summer bird,
I was beneath the tide a tor,
To see my dog shake his jumpy locks
And heading plump on the mossy ware,
To hear it out on the moss-grown rocks
That folly dog poor Bruno's grave.
Oh! richer far than a monarch's crown,
To me, the water-lilies white,
I wreathed amid sister's hair brown;
And decked my hat with posies bright.
Sweet, thirty dear as a wood-bird's song,
Or mid-ship in the mossy wall,
Beneath her voice, as we skipped along
The fragrant, clover-veiled dell.
Peace, achy heart! for her song is hushed;
And in death's vale she lies untried,
All beauty's bloom, and all her charms crushed,
Beams brighter round her angel-bow.
Ah! me alone, mid the gushing gloom,
The last of our dear household band,
I turn my steps to my mother's room,
And in its death-like silence stand.
The green damp mould on the crumbling wall,
Scented volumes written by my father,
Which wrap my soul in a wintry thrall,
As thick clouds wrap the night—
The jangling creak of the broken pane,
And hung her jewels o'er the table,
Like lamps of love that had cold rain—
Through gloom I trace bright sun-beams still.

A ROMANCE OF CYPRUS.

EVERY traveler who has ever visited Cyprus has heard of Signor Baldo Matteo, the Elenczer Scrog of the East. While I was at Larnaca, a sad adventure, furnishing ample materials for a melodrama, nearly terminated old Baldo's life and all his speculations. His only daughter and hearse lost her heart to a needy Austrian, who had come to Cyprus expressly to make his fortune by marriage. Hearing of the wealth of old Baldo, and of his daughter, he fixed upon him at once; but Baldo was not to be easily caught, and totally repulsed every advance. The Austrian grew desperate, and, as a final resource, became fanatically religious, attending the Catholic chapel, morning, noon, and night. Nothing could exceed his devotion to a certain old priest, whenever it was attacked, till the priest passed off. When, after this was whispered to him, the sin that preyed most heavily upon his mind, which was his wish to possess riches, that he might bestow them on Mother Church, and hinted at a passion for Miss Baldo, he received immediate absolution, and was next day dining at old Baldo's table, in company with the Padre President, and seated next to the object in whom all his hopes were concentrated. Miss Baldo was luckily placed on his right, and heard with unexpressed rapture all his protestations of love and devotion. Had she been on his left, these would all have been lost, as she had been perfectly deaf on that side from her birth. To be brief, the Austrian proposed, and was accepted, and all that he had now to obtain was old Baldo's consent. Baldo, however, as a man of the world, saw clearly through his designs, and knew him to be a miserably poor fellow, who had introduced the Austrian to give a decided negative. All he asked was time—a year to consider so important a measure. This was accorded, and Baldo devoutly prayed that the true character of his daughter's suitor might be before that time be unmasked. His prayer was granted, but in the way he least expected, and certainly the least agreeable to himself. The lover of the Signorina Baldo, finding his exchequer rather low, and being sorrowfully conscious of his inability to increase his wealth, so as to enable him to keep up necessary appearances to the desperate resource of grasping, without farther delay, his intended wife's fortune, by sending poor old Baldo out of the world. Accordingly armed with a double-barreled pistol, which he concealed about his person, he proceeded to Matto's house at an hour when he knew he would find him alone, the daughter and servants being in the habit of attending mass on Sunday mornings; and he knocked at the door, which old Baldo, though believing to be an honorable man, and fair, and just in his transactions with his house, was a confirmed miser. He had accumulated great sums in hard cash, which, unseen by human eye, he had buried in his garden, and hidden in various parts of his house. The house was going to ruin, and wanted whitewashing and repairing in many parts. The garden was a perfect wilderness of weeds and thistles; but these he set fire to regularly once a year, and by this means to a certain extent kept them under. As for his appearance, he was a spare, thin, old man, with a long nose, and a few white hairs, which he used to comb back with a comb of tortoise shell, and a pair of spectacles, which he wore on earth apparently a corpse. For such the murderer took him; and depositing the pistol close by his side, to make it appear he had died by his own hand, he rushed into the street, closing the door after him. Running with the haste of a man charged with some important news, he came suddenly on a gentleman attached to the Austrian consulate, whom he breathlessly informed that, passing near Baldo's house, he had heard the report of a pistol followed by a sound like that of some heavy body falling to the earth; that he had knocked at the door in vain for admission, and that he had no doubt, in his own mind, that some sad catastrophe had occurred. In a few seconds a perfect mob was collected at old Baldo's door, which they broke open, and rushing in beheld old Baldo stretched upon the ground, his clothes literally saturated with blood, and a pistol lying close by his side. The assassin who never dreamed that the old man was alive, witnessed this

scene with fending triumph, though loudly lamenting the loss of him whom he called his best friend on earth. But it happened that the ball, though it struck against a part where a wound would have become mortal, had come in contact with a sharp edge of a bone, which had turned it another direction, and it was now safely lodged between the skin and spine. Baldo, who had fainted from fright and loss of blood, now, to the amazement of all, recovered his senses, and hearing the voice of his late assailant, slowly raised himself up, and denounced him on the spot. Having done this, he fell back, and again became unconscious. The wretch was immediately seized and handcuffed, and safely borne away to the Austrian consulate, where he was placed in confinement. Doctors were now assembled from all parts of Cyprus, and all examined the wound, and declared it fatal, expressing the greatest surprise that the patient should have lingered so long. The blood being stanching, and Baldo suffering from no injury, but laboring under a sense of approaching dissolution, begged that a confessor might be sent for. To this confession, he acknowledged, among other grave offences, the commission of one sin which weighed heavier than all the rest upon his guilty conscience. It appeared that his niece who was then married to a French merchant at Larnaca, had been left at a very early age an orphan, and had become his ward. She had, however, been well provided for by her parents, and a large sum of money had been deposited in his hands, which after covering the expenses of her education, board, &c., would still leave a considerable surplus as a marriage portion. Now old Baldo, never forgetting his thrift, had more than twice turned this capital over before the date of his niece's marriage, but he had retained the proceeds as his own, handing over the principal to the bridegroom on the nuptial day. But on the approach of death, as it seemed, he felt considerable qualms of conscience, and confessed his unworthy stewardship, and indicated the spots where the savings were concealed. The husband of the niece quickly dug them up, and came into possession. Scarcely was this done, when Baldo recovered, and would almost have forgiven the attempt upon his life, had it not involved such serious results. The Austrian was, by the Turkish authorities handed over to his own consulate, and was eventually removed to Trieste; but, I believe, for lack of sufficient testimony, escaped punishment.

JOE BOWERS'S WEDDING.

THE County of _____, "arise up in the morning" boasts one of the best Judges in California. On the bench he is firm, but his head is so full of what he terms "judicial talk," that he frequently finds himself making learned charges, and passing sentences, outside of the court room. On a recent occasion, he was called on to exercise the "power and authority, in him vested," in the case of a young couple who desired to have their hands united in the holy bond of wedlock. Of course he consented to perform the pleasing duty, and on the appointed evening was promptly on hand. The room was crowded with the beauty and fashion of the town. It is customary, on occasions of the kind referred to, for the good folks of the mountains to pass around the wine quite freely. The Judge is an ardent admirer of the fair sex, and that he should get a little mellow amid the glorious scenes of the evening, was not to be wondered at by those who knew him intimately. The wine had passed. The music had ceased. The time for making Joseph Bowers and Nancy Harkins one, had arrived. Every heart throbed with most delightful emotions. The young gentlemen desired to know how Joe would stand it, and the young ladies were anxious to see how Nancy would suffer the anxious look. Others, again, who had closely observed the turn of affairs during the evening, fixed their attention upon the Judge, to see how he would come out of the scrape. At length the trying moment was announced. The Judge arose very cautiously from the chair which he had occupied in one corner of the room, and casting his eyes over the company, singled out the Sheriff of the county, who was present as an invited guest. The Judge had imbibed just enough to make him forget the nature of his business. Looking sternly at the officer, he shouted: "Mr. Sheriff, open the Court, and call order."

A general titter followed this command, in the midst of which the Sheriff took the "Court" gently by the arm, and led him to the corner of the room, and at the same time in, forming that august perogone of the mistake. Everything now hid fair, until another annoyance, which was nothing else than the absence of the bridegroom, was observed. It turned out that he had just stepped across the street to join his friends in a parting drink; but, before his return, some cold-blooded wad had whispered in the ear of our fofey the cause of delay in the proceedings. Instantly the chair in the corner moved, and in that direction all eyes were fixed: "Mr. Sheriff," slowly bawled the Judge, "bring Joe into Court on a supenor."

"Bring Joe into Court on a supenor," the Judge had his own way of pronouncing the word. Then addressing the bride, who stood in the foreground, and hung her head in deep confusion, he added: "I s'pose you are the Plaintiff. Well, don't take on. Innocence and virtue will be protected by this 'ere Court."

This was the saddest blunder of all. The Judge was again made to see his mistake, and would have been considerably set back, had it not been for a corrective in the shape of forty drops of the critter, which he instantly applied. In a few moments all was ready. The bridegroom had arrived full of joy. The company pressed forward. The excitement was intense. He evidently felt every inch a Judge. "J-J-o-e B-B-o-o-w-e-r-s," commenced the man of law, in the most distressing style of speech with which he was invariably troubled when under the influence of liquor, "J-J-o-e B-o-w-e-r-s, stand up. Here y-you are not to be for a corrective in the shape of forty drops of the critter, which he instantly applied. In a few moments all was ready. The bridegroom had arrived full of joy. The company pressed forward. The excitement was intense. He evidently felt every inch a Judge. 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