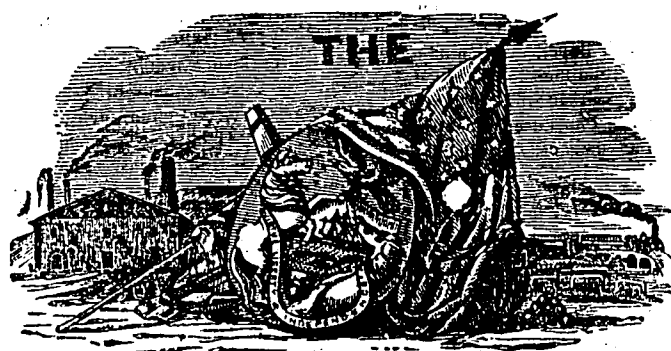


Lehigh



Register.

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FOR FARMER AND MECHANIC.

Devoted to Politics, News, Literature, Poetry, Mechanics, Agriculture, the Diffusion of Useful Information, General Intelligence, Amusement, Markets, &c.

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Poetical Department.

Centuries Ago.

It was the calm and solemn night!
Seven hundred years and fifty-three
Had Rome been growing up to might,
And now was Queen of land and sea.
No sound was heard of clashing wars—
Peace brooded o'er the hushed domain—
Appollo, Pallas, Jove and Mars
Held, undisturbed, their ancient reign,
In the solemn midnight,
Centuries ago.

'Twas in the calm and silent night;
The Senator of haughty Rome
Impatient urged his chariot's flight,
From lordly revel rolling home;
Triumphal Arches, gleaming, swell
His breast with thoughts of boundless sway;
What rock'd the Roman what befel,
A paltry province, far away,
In the solemn midnight,
Centuries ago.

With that province far away,
Went plodding home a lonely boor;
A streak of light before him lay,
Fall'n through a half-shut stable door,
Across his path. He passed—for nought
Told what was going on within;
How keen the stars, his only thought,
The air how cold and calm and thin,
In the solemn midnight,
Centuries ago.

Oh! strange indifference! low and high
Drowned over common joys and cares;
The Earth was still—but knew not why;
The world was listening unawares,
How calm a moment may precede
One that shall thrill the world for ever;
To that still moment none would heed,
Man's doom was linked no more to sever,
In the solemn midnight,
Centuries ago.

It is the calm and solemn night,
A thousand bells ring out, and throw
Their joyous peals abroad, and smite
The darkness—charged and holy now!
The night that erst no name had worn,
To it a happy name is given;
For in that stable lay, new-born,
The peaceful Prince of Earth and Heaven,—
In the solemn midnight,
Centuries ago.

Little Children.

Weep not for them! It is no cause for sorrow,
That theirs was no long pathway to the tomb;
They had one bright day; no sad to-morrow
Rising in hope, and darkening into gloom.

Weep not for them, their snowy plumes, expanded
E'en now are waving through the worlds of light
Perchance, on messages of love remanded,
They sweep across your slumbers in the night.

Weep not for them! Give tears unto the living!
Oh, woe no vain regret on lot like theirs!
But rather make it reason for thanksgiving
That ye have nurtured angels unawares.

Miscellaneous Selections.

A CHRISTMAS EVE AT THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

Previously to the year 1847 I was comparatively a wealthy man. From small beginnings I had gradually risen to a station far beyond that to which I looked forward when I started in life. Emboldened by the success which had attended my former transactions, I plunged deeply into the railway speculations which were then so prevalent, and the result was that my golden visions vanished with those of other dreamers, and I found myself the loser of the bulk of my fortune, having, however, luckily saved a small portion from the general wreck.

It was a heavy blow to me. So confident had I been of success, that I had been revolving the project of a marriage with a lady of suitable wealth, and therefore the disclosure of the real state of my affairs came like a thunder clap. But my previous struggles with the world having hardened my sensibility and sharpened my penetration, I at once set about collecting the ruins of my property, and consulted with my friends as to the best means of employing the little capital with which I was to begin the world afresh.

Their advice was rather contradictory; but at length an idea of my own originating, attained an ascendancy in their judgment.—Acting upon it I purchased some land in the vicinity of the Cape Colony, and soon after set off to my new home there. When I ar-

rived, I found my land situated upon the very borders of the civilized districts; indeed, it was more advanced than any of the pieces already occupied. The natives were rather friendly, for the war having been concluded to their apparent satisfaction, they seemed inclined to show kindness to the whites.

My task was pretty hard, but I bore up against new difficulties with an energy which surprised me. By degrees my loneliness was alleviated by a few new comers who settled round me, and I began to be reconciled to my novel situation. After the first years had passed; I became more accommodated to my work; indeed, I found it much lighter and easier than when I had to break the ice, as I may say.

On Christmas eve, 1850, a party, composed of friendly neighbors, was assembled round my hearth for the purpose of renewing in a foreign land the festivities with which the season is celebrated in England. First in rank, (according to my colony notions,) set John White, who had been in the employ of the settlers since he was a boy of ten, which was then thirty years ago. During this time he had acquired an extensive knowledge of Cape life, and contrived to save sufficient to purchase a piece of land contiguous to mine. The next was a ten years' settler, Harry Percy, who also understood something of the wild countries; and the remaining two, Richardson and Hall, were men of about thirty, and a few months my juniors in the experience of this kind of life.

We were seated round the fire talking over our several adventures and experiences, when a violent knocking at the door interrupted us, and a voice exhorted us to admit the owner for the sake of God. Our party were on their feet in an instant, and we at once opened the door to the stranger, who rushed in with looks of terror. By his dress, which was torn and much stained with dirt, we recognized him as one of the native police, and eagerly interrogated him as to the cause of his alarm.

He explained, that having, with a companion, gone in search of a man who had stolen some bullocks, three Kaffirs had attacked them in the evening, within a quarter of a mile of my house, when his fellow had been killed, and he himself had escaped with difficulty. Under these circumstances he implored our protection, which, I need not say, was readily granted.

Rumors of an outbreak among the native tribes had reached us, and therefore we had thought it prudent to keep our weapons near us, although apprehensive of no immediate danger. My friend White glanced at the row of rifles which our party had placed by the wall, and observed—"The man says there are only three. We are five, and could see justice done."

The native eagerly seconded this suggestion, and the result was, that seizing our weapons, we quitted my house in search of the robbers, leaving Hall behind to protect my property.

The night was rather threatening. When the moon occasionally shone forth with a faint glimmer, we could discern great piles of clouds approaching, or already surrounding her. Only here and there a star could make itself visible, and as we went on, even these wholly disappeared.

We followed the stranger for at least half a mile, anxiously looking round for signs of the presence of his late assailants. Not a sound, however, broke the heavy silence of the night. We proceeded over a piece of rising ground which lay within my bounds, and when these latter were passed, continued our course into a little valley which was situated beyond.

We hurried along the path which had been worn in the centre, while at our right and left hands rose a sloping embankment, forming a rather lofty wall on either side.—These walls were covered with long grass, interspersed with trees and bushes of various kinds. No settler had yet taken possession of it, although it was a promising spot, and consisting of fertile earth, as the abundance and richness of its vegetation, even without artificial assistance, plainly proven.

We had reached the centre of this miniature valley when our native guide suddenly stopped. He said in a low whisper to White—

"It was here or about day stop me. I creep forward soft, find 'em, and come back to tell."

"No!" replied the veteran colonist, "you lead us to them. We can come gently after you."

The other urged objections with such eagerness, and hesitated so much to proceed with us at his heels, that White became the more resolute to accompany him.

"You are a stranger to us," he observed, in reply to the ebullition of argument—"we came here to protect you, and if you practice treachery, you shall dearly answer for it."

As he spoke, he reached his hand to grasp him by the shoulder. The fellow, alarmed at the action, eluded him and sprang into a thick bush close by, uttering a loud cry.—A sickening emotion of despair seized us when we perceived the treachery which had been practised upon us. With a fur-

ous imprecation White raised his rifle in the direction of the fugitive, a stream of flame poured from its muzzle into the bush, a yell of mortal agony mingled with the roar of the explosion, and resounded with it among the hills.

"One of 'em!" muttered White, between his teeth.

A chorus of cries burst from the ambushed savages, and we heard the rustling of the long grass and the trampling of many feet in close proximity. We commenced rapidly retracing our steps. White leading, and reloading by the way. We were soon convinced by the savage noises which were heard in our rear that we were discovered, and in a few moments we became aware that the whole band of wretches were in full pursuit.

Favored by the darkness, we contrived to ensconce ourselves in the midst of a clump of trees before our foes could overtake us.—They passed the place of our concealment in hot pursuit, and in a few minutes had put some distance between us and them.—But their fierce yells were echoed with such fearful distinctness that a foe seemed to be approaching from every side, and we knew not which way to turn.

Cautiously emerging from our concealment, we hurried to avail ourselves of the shelter of another clump of bushes, and by thus changing our quarters several times, we contrived to get over some distance.—Once, when we were starting for a fresh ambush, we all distinctly heard a rustling noise in the grass, and shrank back in dismay. We remained for some time anxiously listening a repetition of it; but in a few minutes we heard the return of Kaffirs, who were rushing along the path at a furious rate.

White, who understood the purport of their exclamations, informed us that they believed we had evaded their pursuit.—Overjoyed at the prospect of escaping their anticipated vengeance, we were crouching still closer in concealment while they passed, when, to our unspeakable dismay, a figure started from the long grass within three yards of us, and leaped directly into the pathway.

"All up!" whispered White to us; "what we wish to keep we must fight for!"

When I consider that I had never seen a shot fired in earnest before, and looked at the odds which were against us, I am surprised at the coolness with which I examined my rifle and prepared my knife for deadly work.—My energies were all collected to sustain the excitement of the struggle, and I even awaited the onset of the savages with impatience.

They were not long assembling in a body directly in our front, where they deliberated for a few minutes. Our inclinations prompted us to let fly amongst them while they were thus crowded together, but Henry Percy urged the necessity of reserving our fire, and therefore we waited.

Presently our enemies made a simultaneous movement, and a shower of spears fell upon the bush in front. They then uttered their war cry and rushed on us, keeping huddled together in a large mass.

They were within three yards of us when, taking steady aim at breast height, we discharged our weapons amongst them. A fiendish chorus of screams of agony and imprecations of vengeance ensued, by which we were made aware that our fire had not been without due effect.

Checked but for an instant, our ferocious foes, howling with fury, leaped into the bush, behind which we lay concealed. Now, we found that a hand to hand struggle must decide the question. We rose to our feet and fell upon the bloodthirsty wretches with the utmost fury. Grasping my rifle by the barrel with both hands, I dashed the stock down upon them with a force that must have made a due impression on all who encountered the descending weapon. The maddened yells of the savages, the continual crashing of bushes, the deep imprecations and short breathings of our party, and the heavy sound of the rapidly interchanged blows, all mingling together, produced a frightful effect. From the manner in which they had attacked us, and the horrible cries to which they continually gave vent, I could not look upon our assailants as beings of my own species; and in the midst of the awful din I continued my heavy blows as if I had a troop of ghouls to contend with, who were fighting only for our blood.

During the first panic we contrived to keep them at a fair distance, but they soon passed so close that our clubbed rifles became unavailable. I drew my knife and sprang to grapple with a huge fellow who was preparing to dash his formidable hatchet upon the head of White, who was already engaged.

Had we been on even ground I should have been able to have struck him before he could have been ready for me; but by floundering amid the bushes I lost my opportunity. I however speedily wrested his weapon from his grasp, and was preparing to do execution upon him, but a friend came to his assistance, and in a moment after, I was upon the ground, struggling between the pair.

My fresh antagonist appeared to be chiefly intent on obtaining possession of my rifle, and he seized it by the barrel and commenced twirling it about to effect his purpose.—Seeing a favorable opportunity I suddenly relinquished my hold, and with the disengaged hand put a period to the opposition of his fellow. Turning to rise from the ground, I beheld the second native standing over me and preparing to bring down the stock of my gun upon me. Before I had time to lift an arm in defence, it fell upon my head with a crash that sent flashes of fire across my eyes and deprived me of all sense.

After some time passed in an insensible state, I began to experience a feeling of suffocation, which caused me to make several convulsive efforts to draw my breath; then recollection slowly returned to me and opened my eyes. I found myself lying upon the floor or kind of hut, I guessed was Kaffir workmanship, and near me, though not watching me, stood a native warrior. Gleams of strong light were thrown into the place through the door, proceeding, as I judged, from a large fire, and illumined some portion of the hut, while the remainder was left in total darkness. From my dark corner, I observed some person lying down at a distance, and the light, suddenly flashing with more than usual brightness, revealed poor White, bound with strong twigs, and looking as disconsolate as possible.

Seeing him so firmly secured, I examined my own limbs, fully expecting to find myself in the same condition. However, not a withe was upon me, and I left assured that my captors believed me to be dead.

I was aware from what I had heard of their character that they would not allow us to live, it being their custom to murder their prisoners in cold blood; and thus my ideas were immediately directed to the means of effecting an escape from present custody.—I took a thorough mental survey of the aspect of the things in my prison, as I suppose I may term it, and set about concocting a scheme.

Beside White myself, and the native, there was evidently no other living being in the place. The native was armed only with a rifle, which I had little difficulty in recognizing as my property, and was standing with his back to me, looking at White, and occasionally addressing a scolding remark to him.

It was apparent to me that, couldn't prevent this man from rushing from the hut, he possessed but two means of alarming his countrymen—namely, his voice and his gun. I had not the least doubt of my ability to overcome him if he were deprived of the powers of rousing his fellows; and as I was conscious nothing could be done without first putting him out of the way I resolved at once to make an attempt upon him.

Rising slowly and with great care from my recumbent posture, I stood on my feet, and made sure I had but one to cope with. Satisfied of this, I moved forward with the same caution till I had got within a yard of my foe.

He was standing leaning upon his rifle upon the verge of the dark portion of the place, his back being towards me. Thus my shadow would protect me from observation until I had crept so near as to touch him. I went as close as I dared venture, and calculated on the means of preventing an alarm.

A thought suddenly flashed across me as I stood thus deliberating. I acted upon it immediately. As the fellow was leaning on the gun, the stock placed upon the ground behind his foot. I crouched on my knees, reached forward my hand, gently opened the pan, and wiped out the priming with my finger. This accomplished, I once more rose to my feet.

A minute was spent in deliberation, and then I sprang to his side, placed my right hand upon his throat, which I grasped with all my strength, and clasped him round the waist with my left arm, at the same time pulling him opposite elbow to his back with my disengaged hand. Half strangled, and unable to articulate, he raised the rifle, and as I forced him back into the darkness, I heard the ineffectual click of the lock. Exerting all my science in wrestling, I threw him heavily upon his back, falling with him and keeping my hold upon his windpipe.—I placed my knee upon his chest and in a few minutes, after a useless struggle on his part, I knew that he would never speak more.

I then left him and stole up to White, who had been an amazed spectator of my feat, and asked him a few questions about the best manner of proceeding, at the same time releasing him from bondage. He told me that our two friends had made good their escape from their assailants, but that he, being entangled in the bush, was unable to follow them, and consequently had been taken prisoner; and that the natives were sleeping outside while the man I had killed whose brother and father had perished in the affray had remained in the hut to taunt him. He advised that we should proceed quietly through the midst of our sleeping enemies and if we were discovered he said the best we could do was to make a rush for it, as our lives depended on our success.

These hurried words having passed between us, I secured my rifle and joined my

companion at the entrance. As we cautiously emerged into the open air. I perceived that the natives had kindled a fire to protect them from the attacks of wild beasts and were sleeping around it. We passed them in the full glare of the flame without disturbing them, and began to feel assured of our safety.

My friend was pointing out the path which led to our settlement, when I suddenly struck my foot against a dark object that lay before me. A yell broke from it, and I felt my leg in the grasp of a pair of hands. I commenced striking with desperate fury in the direction of my unseen foe, who redoubled his cries, which soon aroused the circle of natives sleeping round the fire.—One of them threw a blazing brand in our direction the light from which exposed the whole affair. Clutching my leg with all his strength lay the fellow who had caused the mischief while White and myself were endeavoring to disengage him. The light enabled me to direct my blows with certainty, and a crushing hit on the forehead soon laid the rascal on his back.

"There was no time to be lost, for we had drawn the whole gang upon us.

"Run for it!" exclaimed White, now con- cerned was at an end; "those devils will follow like wild-fire."

We darted off at such a pace as men only can run when dear life depends on their exertions. The forest trees flew past us as we held on in the homeward path; our pursuers followed also at a prodigious speed, occasionally sending a spear by way of amusing us.

It was a sultry night, and I soon began to feel the effects of my unusual exercise. The perspiration poured from my skin as I toiled on by the side of my more hardy companion who was accustomed to long runs, and who bounded along like a denizen of the woods we were traversing.

At length I began to experience the sensation of a bandage being bound round my brain, my eyes became hot and dry, and I drew my breath with difficulty. I panted with such violence that White gave me his hand, and assisted me on the way.

Our pursuers kept to the chase with that speed and perseverance for which savage races are so notorious. At periods they saluted us with a shower of their rude spears, accompanied by yells of defiance, and once or twice the sound of a rifle shot resounded in the solitude. Both weapons were, however, equally harmless and could we have maintained our pace, we had an excellent chance of making good our escape.

But the pressure upon my brain became more and more oppressive, and I ran on almost mechanically. My gallant friend cheered me with his voice, and assisted me with his hand; but nevertheless, my efforts became more feeble, as each yard of our course was left behind, and at last, with blood gushing from my nose, I reeled against the massive trunk of a forest patriarch, and stammered out my inability to proceed.

"Only another mile, Thornley, and you're at your own door," replied White.

"No, no! save yourself—not another step," I stammered.

"Well if that's the case, we must do our best against you devils; but as to saving myself, why, in the truth, I won't leave you an inch!" was the energetic response.

We drew between two trees to conceal ourselves; but the moon having emerged from behind the clouds which had shaded her in the early part of the evening, betrayed the movement to our enemies, who were soon yelling in front.

"Here's for the first of you!" exclaimed White, as he retreated behind one of the trees and levelled my rifle at the first who approached. But the priming not having been replaced, the action was harmless, and a heavy blow by the stock was substituted.

If they don't come behind, we may keep 'em some time, whispered my companion; but even as he spoke the crashing of heavy bodies was heard amid the bushes in our rear.

"I'll pay the coming one!" resumed he and he ran up close to the bushes, and took his stand by a gleam of moonshine, across which these fresh assailants would be compelled to pass.

A form emerged into the light, and the watcher uttered an exclamation of joy as he discovered that the stranger was a white man. Our two friends who escaped had mustered a strong party for our rescue, and guided by the yells of the Kaffirs, had hastened to save or avenge us; and a score of dead bodies and many wounds on living ones attested how well they kept their word.

(From the Spirit of the Times.)

"NOT QUITE THE CHEESE."—A STRONG SKETCH.

On entering my rooms a few evenings since, I found Vol. 10th, of the "Spirit," fresh from the bindery. Opening it, I commenced carelessly turning over the leaves, when my eyes fell on the sentence above, "Not quite the cheese." Now, what the deuce gave rise to that saying? I thought I, as the words, recalled to memory a scene which was rather a "strong" impression on a sensitive organ, I did not easily forget it.

Some years since I was employed as a

warehouse clerk, in a large shipping-house in New-Orleans, and while in that capacity, I came across something that wasn't "quite the cheese," as the sequel will testify.

One day a vessel came in, consigned to the house, having on board a large lot of cheese from New York; during the voyage, some of them had become damaged by bilge water, consequently the owners refused to receive it, as it was not, as the bills of lading said, "Delivered in good order and well condition," they were therefore sent to the consignees of the ship, to be stored until the case could be adjusted. I discovered a few days afterward, that as to perfume, they were decidedly too fragrant to remain in the ware-house in June, and reported the same to the concern, from whom I received orders to have them overhauled, and erred all that was possible to Beard & Calhoun's auction mart, to be disposed of for the benefit of the underwriters, and the rest to the swamp.

I got a gang of black boys to work on them, and when they stirred 'em up, "Be the bones of Moll Kelly's quart mug!" but the smell was illigant intirely." I kept a respectable distance, believe me, for "strong" nigger and "strong" cheese, on a hot June day, just bangs all common essences, including a certain 'varmint' we read about.

Presently the boys turned out an immense fellow, about three feet six across the stump, from which the box had rotted off; in the centre a space of about ten inches was very much decayed, and appeared to be about the consistency of mush, of a bluish tint, which was caused by the bilge water. The boys had just set it up on its edge, on a bale of gunny bags, when I noticed over the way a big darkey from Charleston, S. C., who was notorious for his biting propensities, having given most of the niggers in the vicinity a taste of his quality in that line. I had seen him and another fellow, the night previous, practising; they would stand, one on each side of a hydrant some ten yards distant and run at each other with their heads lowered, and clapping their hands on the hydrant; they would but like veteran rams.

A thought struck me that I might cure him of his bragging and butting, and have some sport also, so I told the boys to keep dark, (which, by the way, caused very little exertion to them all niggers,) and I called "Old Jake" over.

"They tell me you are a great fellow for butting, Jake!"

"Is some, Massa, das a fac—I done butt de wolt 'tired or ob old Pete's head last night, and Massa Nichols was gwine to gib me goss! I kin jiss bang de head of ob any nigger in dese parts, myself—I kin!"

"Well, Jake, I've got a little job in that line for you when you haven't anything else to do."

"I see on ban for all dom kin of jobs, myself—I is."

"Well, you see that largo cheese back there?"

"I dose dat! I dose, myself."

"Now, if you can butt a dent in it, you shall have it."

"Golly, Massa! you foolin' dis nigger!"

"No! am not, Jake—just try me."

"Wot! you gib me de hull ob dat cheese if I butt a dent in um?"

"Yes."

"De Lor! I'll bust 'em wide open, I will myself. Jess stan back dar, you Orleans niggers, and clar de track for Ole Sou' Carolina, 'case I see a comin, myself—I is!"

And Old Jake started back some fifty feet, and went at it at a good quick run, and the next instant I heard a dull, heavy sound a kind of splash, and Old Jake's head disappeared from sight, with the top just visible on the other side, as he arose with his new-fashioned necktie, the soft rotten cheese oozing down all around him, as it settled down, so that just his eyes were visible.—From the centre of it Jake's voice was scarcely audible, and half smothered, as he vainly tried to remove the immense cheese.

"O-o-o-o-r de Lor! Mas—took um orf! O-o-o, bress'd Lor! Lif um up! Gor a mighty, I—"

Meanwhile I was nearly dead myself, having laid back on a cotton bale, holding myself together to keep from bursting, while the boys stood around Old Jake, paying him off.

"De Lor, how de nigger's briff smell! you does'n't clean your teeth Old Jake!"

"I say you didn't make more dan four times dat han, old boss."

"Well, you is a nasty nigger, das a fac."

"Well, you is do biggest kind of Welsh Rabbit, you is."

"Whar you git your hair grease?" and thus the boys ran on Old Jake—now half smothered—until I took compassion on him and told them to take it off. Jake didn't stay to claim his prize, but put out a growling—

"Gor a mit! I done got solo, dat time! I see a case of Yaller fever—I is myself!"

Old Jake was never known to do any more butting in that vicinity after that, and I am still of the opinion that it was "Not quite the cheese."

"Ma," said a youngster, after reading the life of Napoleon, "Bonaparte was a hero, wasn't Joaz of 'Arc a shero."