

THE COLUMBIA DEMOCRAT.

"I have sworn upon the Altar of God, eternal hostility to every form of Tyranny over the Mind of Man."—Thomas Jefferson.

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TERMS:

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MISCELLANY.

LAUGHABLE STORY.

The following is a laughable account of the misfortunes which befel an American gentleman upon a visit to a lady in Paris to whom he bore letters of introduction. After relating a number of ludicrous and amusing mistakes upon his entrance into the presence of the lady, he thus proceeds:

"The ordinary routine of a French dinner commenced. A regular series of servants appeared each instant at elbows, inviting us to partake of a thousand different kinds of wines under a string of names which I no more understood than I did their composition or they did my gaucheries. Resolute to avoid all further opportunities for displaying my predominant trait, I sat in the most obstinate silence saying out to every thing that was offered to me and eating with the most devoted application, till my fair neighbour, wearied with my taciturnity and her own at length herself began conversation by enquiring how I was pleased with the opera. I was just raising a large morsel of potatoe to my mouth and in order to reply as quickly as possible I hastily thrust it in intending to swallow it as hastily. Heavens! it was hot as burning lava, what could I do! The lady's eyes were upon me, waiting for a reply to her question. But my mouth was in flame. I rolled the burning morsel hither and thither, rocking my head from side to side, while my eyes which I involuntarily fixed upon her, were strained from their sockets. She regarded my grimaces of the cause of which she was ignorant, with an expression of amazement and surprise, at which I can laugh now when I think of it.

"Monsieur is ill!" at length she gently and in an anxious tone enquired; I could bear no more. My mouth was flaying with intolerable pain, so quietly abandoning the point, opened it to the utmost and out dropped the infernal brand upon my plate. Not the slightest tendency to risibility ruffled the imperturbable politeness of the lady. She soothingly condescended to me on my misfortune, then gradually led the conversation to a variety of topics, till exerting the magic influence that true politeness always exercises, I began to forget my own blunders. Gradually my cheeks burned less painfully, and I could join in the conversation without the fear that every word I uttered shared the fate of the action I attempted. I even ventured to hope, nay to congratulate myself that the catalogue of calamities was completed for the day.

"Let no man call himself happy before death," said Solon, and he said wisely. The Ides of March were not yet over. Before us stood a dish of cauliflower, nicely done in butter. This I naturally enough took for a custard pudding, which it sufficiently resembled. Unfortunately my vocabulary was not yet extensive enough to embrace all the technicalities of the table and when my fair neighbor inquired if I was fond of chorleure, I verily took it to be the French for custard pudding, and so high was my panegyric of it that my plate was beautifully laden with it. Alas, one single mouthful was enough to dispel the illusion. Would to heaven that the chorleure had

vanished with it. But that remained bodily, and as I gazed despondingly on the huge mass that loomed almost as large and burning Vesuvius, my heart died within me. Ashamed to confess my mistake though I could as readily have swallowed an equal quantity of soft soap, I struggled manfully on against the the mountainous heap at its base—and shutting my mouth to inhale as large masses as I could without stopping to taste it. But my stomach began intelligibly enough to intimate its intention to admit no more of this nauseous stranger beneath its roof, if not even expelling that which had already gained an unwelcome admission.

The seriousness of the task I had undertaken, and the resolution necessary to execute it, had given an earnestness and rapidity to my exertions which appetite could not have inspired, when my plate having got somewhat over the edge of the table, upon my leaning forward tilted up, and down slid the disgusting mass into my lap. My handkerchief unable to bear so weighty a load, bent under in its turn, and a great proportion of it landed safely in my hat. The plate instantly righted itself as I raised my person, and as I glanced my eye round the table, and saw that no one had noticed my disaster, I inwardly congratulated myself that the nauseous deception was so happily disposed of. Resolved not to be detected, I instantly rolled my handkerchief together with its remaining contents and whipped it into my pocket.

The dinner table was at length deserted for the drawing room where coffee and liquors were served round. Meantime I had sought out what I thought a safe hiding place for my hat beneath a chair in the dining-room for I dare not carry it any longer in my hand, having first thrown a morsel of paper to hide the cauliflower, should any one chance in seeking for his own hat to look into mine.

On my return to the drawing room I chanced to be again seated by the lady by whom I had sat at table. Our conversation was resumed, and we were in the midst of animated discussion, when a huge spider was seen up her arm.

"Take it off—take it off," she ejaculated in a terrified voice.

I was always afraid of spiders; so to avoid touching him with my hand, I caught my pocket handkerchief from my pocket and clapped it at once upon the miscreant, who was already mounting over her temple with rapid strides. Gracious heavens! I had forgotten the cauliflower which was now plastered over her face like an emollient poultice, fairly killing the spider and blinding the eye of the lady—while little streamlets of soft butter glided gently down her cheeks and bosom.

"Mondieu! Mondieu!" exclaimed the astonished fair.

"Mondieu!" was the re-echo from every person's mouth.

"Have you cut your hand?" inquired one. "No! no!—the spider—Monsieur is killing the spider."

"What a quantity of entrails!" ejaculated the astonished Frenchman, unconsciously to himself.

Well might he be astonished, the spray of the execrable vegetable had splattered her dress from head to foot. For myself, the moment the accident occurred I had mechanically returned my handkerchief to my pocket but its contents remained.

"What a monster must it have been," observed a young lady as she helped to relieve my victim from her cruel situation. "I declare I should think he had been living on cauliflower."

At that moment I felt some one touch me and turning, I saw my companion who had come with me.

"Look at your pantaloons," he whispered. Already half dead with the confusion and disaster I had caused, I cast my eyes upon my once white dress, and saw at a glance the horrible extent of my dilemma. I had been sitting on the fated pocket and had crushed out the liquid butter and the soft paste-like vegetable,

which had bedaubed and dripped down till it seemed as it were actually dissolving my pantaloons.

Darting from the spot, I sprang to the place where I had left my hat; but before I could reach it, a sudden storm of wrath was heard at the door.

"Sair! bete! sacre!" the *gar* in the first syllable being made to roll like a watchman's rattle mingled with an other epithet and name that as angry Frenchman never spares, was heard rising like a fierce tempest without the doors. Suddenly there was a pause; a gurgling sound as one swallowing involuntarily—and the storm of wrath again broke not with redoubled fury I seized my hat and opened the door, and the whole matter was at once explained; we had exchanged hats—and there he stood the soft cauliflower gushing down his cheeks, blinding his eyes, filling his mouth hair, mustachios, ears and whiskers. Never shall I forget that spectacle. There he stood astride, like the Colossus and stooping gently forward his eyes forcibly closed, his arms drooping out from his body and dripping cauliflower and butter from every pore.

I staid no longer, but retaining his hat, I rushed from the house, jumped into a 'fiacre' and arrived safely home, heartily resolving that to my latest hour, I would never again deliver a letter of introduction.

From the Philadelphia Public Ledger.

AN ODD CIRCUMSTANCE.

During our struggle for independence, a queer transaction occurred at a tavern not many miles from Germantown, between an American and a British soldier. It was on the day prior to the battle of Germantown, yet fresh in the recollection of many of our citizens, that a weary traveller, with a duck gun of a large bore resting on his shoulder, demanded a night's lodging at a public house on the highroad; his bare feet, rimless hat and torn clothing certainly left no good impression on the mind of the tavern keeper, as to the likelihood of his ever being paid for his meals or lodging; but 'mine host' being a true American at heart, and recognizing the traveller at once to be a 'provincial,' he liberally extended to him the comforts of his house and home. The soldier being weary, retired to bed shortly after his arrival. About an hour after, the tramping of the feet of a horse was heard in front of the tavern, and before the barkeeper could open the door, the heavy tread of a man was heard on the piazza of the house. The scarlet coat and rich epaulets of the new comer at once convinced the 'Major Domo' that he was an English officer. He entered the barroom, unloosened his sword belt, and imperatively called for supper and a bed. Here was a dilemma; there was but the one bed—a double bed by the way—in the house and it was occupied by the American private. The landlord at length hesitatingly declared that unless he would condescend to sleep with a fellow traveller he could obtain no lodging. It being several miles to the next public house and already late at night, the officer finally accepted the proposal and was ushered to his dormitory by the light of a flaming pine knot. The night passed tranquilly away, if the lusty snoring of both travellers be excepted. In the morning our provincial private was the first awake. He looked apparently with much surprise, at the British officer, who lay quietly breathing with his mouth open, as if to catch flies. He then examined his tattered shirt, pinched himself in the legs and arms, and then muttered 'Strange! d—d strange!' Finally he pinched the officer's nose, who jumped up evidently terrified.

"Who are you?" demanded our provincial.

"I'm a soldier," was the reply.

"What's your name?"

"Jacob Ellworth."

"You're a liar, that's my name, I'm Jake Ellworth."

"No you're not, that's me," answered the officer, who by this time had recovered his courage.

"What! dy'e want to tell me that you're Jake Ellworth when I'm Jake Ellworth?"

You can't throw sawdust in this child's eyes no how you can fix it—putting his thumb to his nose and shaking his fist at the provincial.

This movement roused the ire of the Yankee to such a degree, that with his clenched fist he struck the Briton a blow on his face and levelled him on the bed; a noise ensued, and but a few minutes elapsed ere the landlord with his attendants arrived at the door; each of the combatants appealed to him to decide who was the real 'Jake Ellworth,' and which was the man who had come to bed last. The landlord surveyed them each in their turn, but their faces, their size, and the color of their hair resembled each other so much that he had declared he was unable to distinguish one from the other. At this moment the hostler arrived at the door with the intelligence that a party of English soldiers could be seen some distance off, marching in the direction of the tavern. The officer laughed and the Yankee looked aghast, but suddenly recollecting himself, seized the Englishman's uniform, ran out of the room and ordered the hostler to saddle his horse. In the yard of the tavern he completed his dress, mounted the officer's steed and boldly meeting the detachment of English soldiers, ordered them to take a d—d rebel, whom he had made prisoner at the next tavern, to the camp. The *manoeuvre* succeeded and the Yankee escaped to the American camp. The English officer in the mean time was arrested by his own men, but whether the mistake was ever discovered—this deponent saith not.

From the Rural Repository.

THE TREMBLING EYE-LID.

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

It was the day before Christmas, in the year 1778, that during our war of the Revolution, an armed vessel sailed from the port of Boston. She was strongly built, and carried twenty guns, with a well appointed crew of more than a hundred, and provision for a cruise of six months. As she spread her broad, white sails, and steered from the harbor with a fair fresh breeze—she made a noble appearance. Many throbbing hearts breathed a blessing on her voyage; for she bore a company of as bold and skilful seamen, as ever dared the perils of the deep. But soon the north wind blew, and brought a heavy sea into the bay. The night proved dark, and they came to anchor with difficulty near the harbor of Plymouth. The strong gale that buffeted them became a storm, and the storm a hurricane.

Snow fell, and the cold was terribly severe. The vessel was driven from her moorings and struck on a reef of rocks. She began to fill with water and they were obliged to cut away her masts. The sea rose above the main deck, sweeping over it every surge. They made every exertion that courage could prompt, or hardihood endure.—But so fearful were the wind and cold, that the stoutest man was not able to strike more than two blows in cutting away the masts, without being relieved by another. The wretched people thronged together on the quarter-deck, which was crowded almost to suffocation. They were exhausted with toil and suffering, but could obtain neither provision or fresh water. They were all covered by the deep sea, when the vessel became a wreck. But unfortunately the crew got access to ardent spirits, and many of them drank to intoxication. Insubordination, mutiny and madness ensued. The officers remained clear-minded, but lost all authority over the crew, who raved around them. A more frightful scene can scarcely be imagined. The sky, the raging storm, the waves breaking wildly over the rocks, and threatening every moment to swallow up the broken vessel, and the half frozen beings who maintained their icy hold on life, lost to reason and to duty, or fighting fiercely with each other. Some lay in disgusting stupidity, or others, with fiery faces, blasphemed God. Some in temporary delirium, fancied themselves in palaces, surrounded by luxury, and brutally abused the servants who they supposed refused to do their biddings.

others there were, who amid the beating of that pitiless tempest, believed themselves in the home they never more must see, and with hollow, reproachful voices besought bread, and wondered why water was withheld from them by the hands that were most dear. A few, whose worst passions were quickened by alcohol to a fiend-like fury, assaulted or wounded those who came in their way, making their shrieks of defiance and their curses heard above the roar of the storm. Intemperance never displayed itself in more distressing attitudes. At length Death began to do his work. The miserable creatures fell dead every hour upon the deck, being frozen stiff and hard.—Each corpse as it became breathless, was laid upon the heap of dead bodies, that more space might be left for the survivors. Those who drank most were the first to perish. On the third day of these horrors, the inhabitants of Plymouth after making many ineffectual attempts, reached the wreck, not without danger. What a melancholy spectacle! Lifeless bodies, stiffened into every form that suffering could devise. Many lay in a vast pile. Others sat with their heads reclining on their knees; others grasping the ice-covered ropes; some in a posture of defence like the dying gladiator; others with hands held up to heaven, as if deprecating their fate. Orders were given to search earnestly for every mark or sign of life. One boy was distinguished amid the mass of dead, only by the trembling of his eye-lids. The poor survivors were kindly received into the houses of the people of Plymouth and every effort used for their restoration. The Captain and Lieutenant, and a few others, who abstained from the use of ardent spirits survived. The remainder were buried, some in separate graves, and others in a large pit, whose hollow is still to be seen on the southwest side of the burial ground in Plymouth. The funeral obsequies were most solemn. When the clergyman who was to perform the last service, first entered, and saw more than seventy dead bodies, some fixing upon him their stony eyes, and others with faces stiffened into the horrible expression of their last mortal agony, he was so affected, as to faint.

Some were brought on shore alive, and received every attention, but survived only a short time. Others were restored after long sickness, but with their limbs so injured by the frost as to become cripples for life.

In a village at some distance from Plymouth, a widowed mother, with her daughter were seen constantly attending a couch, on which lay a sufferer. It was the boy whose trembling eye-lid attracted the notice of pity, as he lay among the dead.

"Mother," he said in a feeble tone, "God bless you for having taught me to avoid ardent spirits. It was this that saved me. After those around me grew intoxicated, I had enough to do, to protect myself from them."

Some attacked and dared me to fight. Others pressed the poisonous draught to my lips and bade me to drink. My lips and throat were parched with thirst. But I knew if I drank with them I must lose my reason, as they did and perhaps blaspheme my maker.

One by one they died, those poor infatuated wretches. Their shrieks and groans, still seem to ring in my ears. It was in vain that the captain and other officers and a few good men warned them of what would ensue if they thus continued to drink, and tried every method in their power to restore them to order. They still fed upon intoxicating liquor. They grew delirious they died in heaps.

Dear mother, our sufferings from hunger and cold, you cannot imagine. After my feet were frozen but before I lost the use of my hands, I discovered a box among fragments of the wreck, far under water. I toiled with a rope to drag it up. But my strength was not sufficient. A comrade who was still able to move a little, assisted me. At length it came within our reach. We hoped that it might contain bread, and took courage—