

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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MISCELLANEOUS.

A MEAL'S A MEAL.

A Short time since the door of a country inn was darkened by a well dressed man of modest and unassuming mien who requested food for his horse, and the extra service of the hostler, inasmuch as the horse had been hardly driven. The stranger had much the appearance of an intelligent farmer of moderate means, who, though liberal perhaps, was never profuse. After attending to the welfare of his horse, he entered the room.

'You may give me,' said he to the landlord, something to eat, but merely a cold bite. My business is very urgent, so anything will serve my turn for the present.

Scarcely a moment had elapsed after his order was issued, ere the tugging of a small bell summoned him to the dining room, which in ordinary places would have been termed no more than a 'bed room.' The fare placed before him, although a cold bite as he had ordered, in the strict sense of the word was meagre in the extreme.

The remains of a cold dish of boiled potatoes, and a glass of water, were all that had been appropriated to his use.

Swallowing a few hasty morsels, he again presented himself at the bar, and demanded his bill.

'Half a dollar for your dinner,' said Boniface.

'Half a dollar! I seldom dispute a tavern bill, sir; but for such as I have had, the charge is an imposition.'

'A meal is a meal,' said the landlord, and that is our regular price.'

'It is a small sum to quarrel about,' observed the traveller, 'but I prefer to be pilfered in a more manly manner.'

'A meal is a meal,' again returned the landlord, in a surly manner, 'we always charge that, whether a man eat more or less good or bad.'

Perceiving altercation to be useless the stranger paid the bill, and called for his horse, and rode away with the muttered exclamation that he would some time have an adequate revenge.

His destination was about fifteen miles distant. After transacting his business, he was about starting the next day on his return. He had mentioned the circumstance to a friend, and that person answered that the tavern was notorious for its extravagant charges, but that he could find him a man who could put the landlord's maxim 'a meal's a meal,' to the test. Accordingly before setting out, our traveller was introduced to his companion, who had obtained, in order to do justice to the entertainment of the employer. He was to be paid the expenses of his dinner and journey. The adventurer was a burley good humored fellow, something of a wag and extremely shrewd.—He was withal an incorrigible glutton.—Eating and telling large stories were his enjoyments. He was fortunately an entire stranger to the inn keeper.

'Landlord,' said the traveller, 'I owe this man, Mr. John Jones, a dinner, which I lost by a very foolish bet. Furnish him one and I will pay it.'

'What will you have?' asked the landlord of Mr. Jones.

'A roast turkey, sir.' The landlord started but issued his orders to the occupants of the kitchen.—They required some little time to comply with the orders. The landlord and Jones made themselves old acquaintances.

'Rather a red face of yours, landlord,' said Jones. 'I haven't seen any thing that looked like spring before; fine blossoms, sir.'

'You are rather a crooked character, Mr. Jones.'

'Rather sir, but not quite so crooked as a tree I once knew. It was the tallest butternut I ever saw. Standing close to it one day in a thunder storm, I saw a squirrel on one of the topmost branches. The lightning struck the same branch about three feet above him—the squirrel started—the lightning had to follow the grain and the squirrel went straight down. So confounded crooked was that tree sir, that the squirrel, by my watch, got to the bottom precisely three minutes before the lightning.'

'That's a lie,' exclaimed the landlord.

'A lie! true sir, true as any story ever was; I afterwards saw that tree cut down, and made into rails for a hog pasture.—The hogs would crawl through twenty times in a day, and so thunderin' crooked were them rails, that every time the hogs got out, they found themselves in the pasture again.'

Before Jones had time to relate another story, the bell rang for dinner. The turkey was there flanked on both sides by a large dish of potatoes, on the other by condiments of various kinds.

'I will thank you said Mr. Jones to the dame! in waiting, to cook me a few slices of beef; I am afraid I shall not be able to make out my dinner at this.'

The girl withdrew in amazement, while Jones made a vigorous attack upon the fowl, which rapidly disappeared before his advances. Wings, legs, and body were soon transformed into a skeleton, and heaped into a large pile beside his plate. The vegetables, too, had sensibly diminished, and he had just laid his hands on an apple pie of uncommon dimensions when the girl made her appearance with the beef.

'Thank ye,' said Jones, 'have the goodness now to cook me some pork steak, rather rare, and bring me a plate of pickles; I have a very strong appetite.'

The girl disappeared, and Jones fell to again, but with less alacrity than before.—He managed, however, to devour the beef just as the girl came in with the pork, the pickles having in the mean time been eaten.

'Now Miss, I'll trouble you for some fresh fish. Have you any?'

While the girl had gone to enquire for this, the landlord, who had been made aware of the havoc that was going on among his viands, entered the room. At this juncture of affairs, the girl came back with the intelligence that they had nothing but a pickled salmon.

'Give me a half a dozen pounds of that then.'

Jones had already stuffed himself to repletion, and to have saved his life could scarcely have swallowed another morsel.—The landlord having heard the last order, thought best to fill up as cheap as possible. 'Won't you have some cider, Mr. Jones?'

'No sir no; I thank you: I always make it a rule never to drink until I get half through.'

'Good God sir, you will eat us out of house and home. Quit now, and you are welcome to what you have eaten.'

'Well, a meal is a meal—but I presume I can obtain more at the next tavern. Tell them they need not cook the salmon. I'll take you at your offer.'

It is almost needless to mention that the landlord soon came to a knowledge of all the circumstances connected with the case and that afterwards he was particular in selecting objects upon whom to practice his shaving propensities.

Remember that no man is completely ruined among men until his character is gone.

From the Cincinnati Star.

ELOPEMENT AND RECONCILIATION.

A TRUE STORY.

An old gentleman of New York was aroused one night, about sixteen years since, by a slight noise proceeding from the chamber where his daughter slept. He arose and hastily drawing on his morning gown, rushed into her room. He arrived in time to perceive that she was descending from the window by a ladder, accompanied by a young man.

The father screamed to his child to come back. Her answer was, as she reached the earth and proudly drew herself up the full height, 'no, my father, you refused to sanction the nuptials between Oscar D— and myself, because, as you said, 'he is nothing but a poor actor in the theatre.' You have even been so harsh and unfeeling as to confine me to my chamber, for fear that I should see and converse with him. I have escaped from your frail prison, and will shortly become his wife.'

'Ho! whist! there,' cried the old man to his servants, stamping with rage, 'why do you sleep when there are robbers in the house! Ay, robbers! for that infernal villain, D—, has entered and stolen away my daughter.' The clattering of a horse's hoofs again attracted his attention to the window. He started back, and said to the men servants who had now congregated around him, 'haste ye stupid snails, haste, and bring out four of the best saddle horses; they have this instant left. Oh! I'll have the infamous wretches yet. They attempt to fly, and both mounted upon a single horse; ha, ha, it's really ridiculous.'

By this time the steeds were at the door. The old gentleman, and three of his men mounted, and set out in pursuit of the fugitives. The chase was long and wearisome. The pursuers were guided through the darkness by the fire which rolled from the iron shod feet of the fugitives' horse.—The old gentleman railed at his followers, urging them to ride faster; but, the attempt fruitless. D's animal was too swift footed, to allow any of them to come up. His followers at last began to lag, and he was soon several miles ahead.

Suddenly the fugitives alighted, and entered the mansion of a worthy justice.—'My dear sir,' said D—, 'I am extremely sorry that I have kept you waiting until this late hour, but unforeseen circumstances have detained us. Please to dispatch your business quickly, as we are somewhat anxious to continue our journey.'

The father in the mean time, was pushing after them as fast as the jaded animals could travel that bore him and his servants. On arriving at the door of the Squire, he perceived the steed of D—, which was covered with foam and seemed almost fatigued to death. The old man dismounted and rushed madly into the house, followed by his servants.

'Ho, he, Catherine,' said he, grasping his daughter by the arm, 'you see it is impossible to escape my vigilance, you impudent jade! I shall keep you more safely confined in future, so your impertinent actor need not again try to escape. If he even dares to again prowl around my premises, like a thief, he will foolishly jeopardize his life. I shall station a guard whose duty it will be to shoot down the first skulking puppy that molests my property. Come, no resistance, you must return with me.'

'Pray, sir, do not be so fast,' said D—, advancing. 'That lady shall not return with you; and, furthermore, it is her lawful husband's command that you loosen your gripe upon her arm.'

'You, her lawful husband, indeed! Did you ever hear such a palpable falsehood?' said the father, giving the justice an inquiring glance.

'It is no falsehood, sir; I united them about fifteen minutes since,' replied the justice.

'Then I denounce you,' said he, casting off his child, and turning significantly to D—, 'I wish you and your bride, a long

and happy life. Farewell, Mistress D—, and never do you dare to show your face to Isaac S—, the rich merchant of Broadway, New York, and the man who once was proud to acknowledge you as his own and only child.' The old man returned to his house childless.

Oscar D— and his lady wended their course to Philadelphia. There they procured an engagement, and Catherine made her debut at the theatre. The character she sustained was Juliet; her husband playing Romeo. They met with unparalleled success, and nothing was spoken of in the whole city but the excellent and unequalled performance of Mr. and Mrs. D—. The gentlemen said, 'nothing on earth can be more exquisite and dazzling than the flashes of her keen black eyes! Oh! what sweet lips! Such a nice little foot and ankle, and then such a charming voice! What a pity it is for such an angel to be tied to that homely husband!' The ladies chattered, 'what an exquisite person he is! he has the most expressive countenance that ever man possessed! He has something about him that looks so noble! his voice, too, is so manly! Oh! it is a great shame that he is united to such a silly looking wife!' The editors puffed them as the 'celebrated Mr. — and his talented and accomplished lady.'

Letter after letter came to them from the managers in other cities, begging of them to accept star engagements. They did accept some of those proposals, and it was not many months before they were known throughout the country as the greatest theatrical stars of the age.

Mr. S— having come business to transact west of the mountains, left his home in New York, and arrived in Cincinnati on the 25th day of April, 1838. The same day he engaged a passage on the steamboat Moselle; wishing to visit Smithland, Ky.

The steamer Franklin left the wharf about an hour before the Moselle. They were considered the swiftest boats upon the western waters, and having never run against each other, the captain of the Moselle had determined to give the other vessel a chase.

It was just in the dusk of the evening when the Moselle, crowded with hundreds of ill-fated passengers hauled in her cable, and started to go a short distance up the river, then turn, and, being under full head way, 'go flying past the city.' The captain ordered the engineers to pile pitch upon the fires and raise every atom of steam in their power, 'for,' cried he, 'I'll either beat the Franklin, or blow her to—' he had not time to finish the sentence, before an awful explosion took place and in an instant mangled bodies and limbs were seen flying in the air. Scarcely a life was saved out of some three hundred human beings who were on board.

Thousands of the citizens rushed to the wreck, to behold this awful spectacle and learn the fate of some unfortunate friend.—Here might be seen a single arm or leg floating down the stream; in another spot an already cold and disfigured corpse, or some poor scalded wretch, writhing in the throes of death. Ha! There is seen upon the surface of the water an old man, who has yet some signs of life. There—there—a gentleman plunges into the river, and swims to his rescue. Thanks be to Heaven; he is saved.

On gaining the shore, the gentleman placed the old man in a carriage, and conveyed him to a neat dwelling in the central part of the city.

The old man, who was Mr. S—, was so exhausted that he was unable to notice any thing around him that evening; but when he arose and entered the parlor next morning he was much astonished to find a little girl, whose features were precisely like those of his long lost daughter.

'What is your name, darling?' said he, gently patting her on the head.

'Catherine, sir,' she replied in a sweet tone.

'Catherine, did you say? Surely it cannot be!'

'Yes sir, that is my name—but you seem ill, shall I call my parents?' said the child, seeing the old man much agitated.

'No no,' he replied, 'I once had a daughter, her name was Catherine. She married against my will, and I disinherited her, and refused her admission to my house. Where she is I know not. Could I but find her, I would give all the property I possess.'

Turning around, he discovered his daughter, leaning on the arm of her husband.—He immediately recognised her, and a reconciliation took place. It appeared that the life of Mr. S— had been saved by the husband of Catherine, and it was soon afterwards announced, that Oscar D— was a partner in business with Mr. S—.

BATTLE OF PRINCETON.

The following touching account of that engagement, is extracted from an unpublished work by Mr. Custis, of Virginia, entitled 'Private memoirs of Washington.'

The heroic devotion of Washington on the field of Princeton, is a matter of history. We have often enjoyed a touching reminiscence of that ever memorable event from the late Col. Fitzgerald, who was aid to the chief, and who never related the story of his general's danger, and almost miraculous preservation, without adding to his tale the homage of a tear.

The aid-de-camp had been ordered to bring up the troops from the rear of the column, when the band under Gen. Mercer became engaged. Upon returning to the spot where he had left the Commander-in-Chief, he was no longer there and upon looking around, he discovered him endeavoring to rally the line which had been thrown into disorder by a rapid onset of the foe. Washington after several ineffectual efforts to restore the fortunes of the fight, is seen to rein up his horse with his head to the enemy, and, in that position, to become immovable. It was a last appeal to his soldiers, and seemed to say, will you give your General to the foe! Such an appeal was not made in vain. The discomfited Americans rally on the instant and form into line; the enemy halt, and dress their line; the American chief is between the adverse posts as though he had been placed there as a target for both. The arms of both lines are levelled. Can escape from death be possible? Fitzgerald horror-struck at the danger of his beloved Commander, dropped the reins upon his horse's neck, and drew his hat over his face that he might not see him die. A roar of musketry succeeds, and then a shout. It was the shout of victory. The aid-de-camp ventures to raise his eyes, and oh, glorious sight, the enemy are broken and flying, while dimly amid the glimpses of the smoke, is seen the chief, 'alive, unharmed, and without a wound,' waving his hat, and cheering his comrades to the pursuit.

Col. Fitzgerald, celebrated as one of the finest horsemen in the American army, now dashed his rowel in his charger's flanks, and heedless of the dead and dying in his way, flew to the side of his chief, exclaiming, 'thank God! your excellency is safe,' while the favorite aid, a gallant and warm-hearted son of Erin, a man of thews sinews, and 'albeit unused to the melting mood,' gave loose to his feelings, and wupt like a child for joy.

Washington, ever calm amid scenes of the greatest excitement, affectionately grasped the hand of his aid and friend and then ordered, 'away my dear Colonel, and bring up the troops—the day is our own!'

Deliberately and fully make up your mind that come what will, you will practice no concealment, or trick, which might have the appearance of fraud. Openness and candor command respect among all good men.

As you are at present in circumstances of great trial, and as many eyes are upon you do nothing rashly: If you need advice, consult only a few. Let them be disinterested persons, of the most established reputations.