

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.

THE ATTORNEY.

AN EXTRACT.

Hour after hour passed; still there sat the attorney looking at that letter. He seemed to have grown old since he entered the room. His face was haggard; his temple sunken; and he twisted his fingers one in another with a kind of childish helplessness.

It was near midnight; and a faint noise echoing through the street made him start and cast his eyes fearfully about him; for he was grown within the last few hours as superstitious as a child. Then he thought of getting up, and going to his own home, away from this sad gloomy office; but he was afraid. His thoughts were not of punishment. They were of the grave, of the earth-worm, of the future, and its unknown eternity. He began to recall to mind what he had done which he must account for hereafter. He began to think his acts over one by one. How clear his memory was! He recollected as it were but yesterday, one man whom he had defrauded of all he owned. He had died in that very room, at his feet; and had cursed him with his dying breath. He knew that, that curse was upon him; he felt his weight palpably pressing him to the earth. Well the man had died; they said his heart was broken, his family had become beggars, and his only child, a beautiful girl, was now a common harlot in the streets. He thought of a poor woman whose son he had imprisoned years before for a trifling debt. The son died in jail, and the mother went mad, and would watch for hours at the office door until he came out; and then would shake her long skinny fingers at him, and laugh in his ear until it made his very flesh creep. Then he thought of many who had come to him in his legal capacity; those whom he was grinding to the dust, to beg for a little delay; but a week, nay, even a day, and they would pay him all; but like a good lawyer, and one who had the interests of his clients at heart he had crushed them to the earth, he had wrong from them their last cent, and had thrown it into the coffers of the rich whom he served. He had turned a deaf ear to them all; but they came now. They would be heard! Their cries were ringing in his ear. He fancied that he saw this sad array coming slowly down the dim street, gliding in the old building one after another; shadowy and spectral, on they come, up the creaking stairs along the dark entry until they were crowding at the door of the office. He could hear them whisper, and fancied that they were pointing at him from without.

He drew his chair closer to the fire; he stirred up the dying coals, for he was beginning to be chilly; and felt that if there was a blaze, it would not be so lonely.— He coughed loudly too, and rattled the poker against the bars of the grate; for there was something in the dread silence that made him shudder. The feeling however, would not go off, for when he ceased, the stillness seemed more intense and fearful. He would have given worlds to have been in his own room in bed; but he dared not venture along that dark passage, crowded with accusers. Then he fancied the office

looked darker and more gloomy, that the lights were duller than usual, and he got up and trimmed them, but still there was the same dull, uncertain light. He tried to argue himself out of these fears—to laugh them off as ridiculous; and he threw himself back in his chair and laughed aloud. If ever mortal man felt the agony of terror he did, for at that moment his laugh was echoed from the dark passage! Crouching back in his chair, with his heart beating fast and hard, and gasping for breath, his hair bristling, he sat watching the door.— He heard a slight motion in the entry, like a sliding creeping step. It stopped. Then it came again, and nearer, then a hand touched the knob and was withdrawn.— Then it took it again, turned it, and opened the door ajar; and two bright eyes glared in through the crack. It opened wider; and a tall, gaunt figure, stole cautiously in turning the key after it. It then slowly and with a cat like step, crept towards the Attorney, until it came in full light of the candle.

With a feeling partly of horror and partly of relief, Bolton sprang to his feet, as the light revealed to him the ghastly features of Wilkins.

'Wilkins,' exclaimed he.

'That's me!' said the other, looking vacantly about him. 'That's me I wonder where Lucy is?'

'Lucy?—your wife?' exclaimed the attorney, staring at him. 'Why, you should know. She's dead, long ago.'

'They told me so,' said he, shaking his head sadly; but I don't believe it. She wouldn't die and leave me all alone. I know she wouldn't. It wasn't like her.'

'Poor fellow!' muttered Bolton. 'It's too true. She's dead.'

'Dead! Then who murdered her?' shouted the man, confronting the attorney: 'who murdered her, I say?' he fairly screamed, and at the same time advancing; 'who murdered her?' 'I'll tell you who did it! It was Reuben Bolton! He did it!—She told me so in the grave yard. I laid my head upon her grave, and she spoke to me, and told me! and I swore I would have revenge! And now I'm looking for him!'

'Good God! George!' exclaimed the Attorney, shrinking from the excited madman. 'I never harmed your wife; indeed I did not!'

'Who are you?' demanded Wilkins clutching him by the coat, and dragging him forward with a strength which his appearance scarcely indicated. 'Ha! have I found you?'

'God! George! I never harmed your wife!' exclaimed Bolton, absolutely paralyzed with fear: 'never, on my soul!'

'You lie! you lie! Where is she then?' demanded Wilkins, now roused to a perfect frenzy of madness. 'I swore I'd revenge her! I've caught him!—now for his blood! Hezza! huzza! shouted he, suddenly dashing his hand in his bosom and drawing out a large knife.'

'God of heaven! protect me!' exclaimed the Attorney, struggling to get loose. 'Help! help! help!'

Now, however, Wilkins was ungovernable. He sprang upon the Attorney and bore him to the earth; but Bolton was a muscular man, and driven to desperation, his struggles were fearful. He threw Wilkins from him, and although wounded, contrived to get to his feet and grasp the poker. This however offered but slight resistance to the maniac. Regardless of blows he dashed in upon the Attorney and drove the knife up to the haft in his stomach, and drew it with a long downward cut, and as the wretched man fell, he sprang upon him, and hacked and gashed him until his loud screams were stopped by the blood that gushed up from his throat, and his groans and cries sank into silence.

John Smith has said many good things, and amongst the rest, that a 'newspaper is like a wife, because every man ought to have one of his own.'

NOTES FOR A TOURIST.

'Madam,' said a free-spoken, warmhearted, enthusiastic, and a little quizzical son of old Kentucky, while paying his devotions to one of the famous lady tourists of America, 'Madam, you should have been born in America, the greatest country in the known world; nature has clustered all her stupendous and dazzling works upon this land, and you should be among them! We have got the greatest men, the finest men the finest women, the broadest lakes, the tallest trees, the widest prairies, the highest waterfalls, and the biggest hearts in the creation.'

'Madam, go and see, the Falls of Niagara. May the Lord take a liking to you, my dear ma'am, if I didn't think I'd waked up in futility, when I first seed that big slantendicular puddle, (slantendicular's an alge-bra word, you mayn't know it.) Why madam, I could tell you something about them falls—but you musn't put it in your book, 'cos nobody'll ever believe it. The people that live around there all loose their speech, and never hear each other speak for years, with the noise of cataract! Fact, ma'am, true as that's a pencil and note book you're taking out your pocket. Why there was a man lived there ten years, and he got so deaf he never knew a man was speaking to him, till a pail of water was poured down the back of his neck! When you go to see the falls, ma'am you must do all the talking you want to before you get within twenty five miles of them, for after that not a word of any kind can be heard!'

'Then, ma'am, you should go and see the great cave in Kentucky, where the bass fiberoaculate in countless millions. There is not another such a hole in the ground to be found upon the earth—Ma'am if you go back to England, you'll put your foot in it—no, beg pardon, you'll excuse me—that's quite impossible; but you'll leave a big hole in the book you're going to write. There is no end known to it, ma'am, and there is a salt water lake in the middle of it twenty-five miles broad. One of the rooms is called the 'Antipodion Chamber,' from the unpronounceable fact that a man can walk just as easy upon the ceiling as upon the floor—and in this apartment there's a natural fountain of pure brandy!'

'The same cave, too, is a positive cure for consumption.'

You haint been South, yet have you ma'am? you haint seen the Mississippi river and the city of New Orleans? Well ma'am, New Orleans is a hundred and twenty-five feet below the level of the sea, and the Mississippi runs through a canal bridge right over the city! The inhabitants are chiefly alligators and screech-owls, the last two words has been vulgarly perverted into Creole. Their food is chiefly gum, procured from trees in the swamp, and which they call gambo. There is a paper published there, called the *Picaron*, the name being well chosen as significant of its professed piracy upon Kant's Philosophy. Baron Munchauson the Pilgrim's Progress, Joe Miller, Washington Irving, and Bell's life in London. It is a violent and stupendous political print, and the government has endeavored in vain to suppress it. One of the peculiar marks about this extraordinary city is the entire absence of those small quadrupeds of the genus most commonly known as rats.—One was seen many years ago, by a citizen, who brutally murdered the unknown creature, but was immediately tried and sentenced to be hung for the enormity.

'You will hear, madam, a great deal about the 'floating population of New Orleans, a phrase which you will understand when I tell you that the town is half the year under inundation from the Mississippi! You should have been born in America, my dear ma'am, but as you were not, you may possibly die here, and that's some consolation to you.'

'Go on, I'll follow thee,' as the thunder said to the lightning.

UP ON SANDY.

A good anecdote is told by a Methodist circuit rider, who not long since called at the house of a Mr.—living somewhere near the head waters of Sandy river! in Virginia, to stay all night. Every body knows the character of the citizens of this region of country, and that it had been for a number of years gone by and in all probability for a number of years to come will continue to be, on account of its mountain fastness, the home of a most ignorant and debased population. Our Parson, a man of great simplicity of character, on entering, found four men seated on the floor playing cards. These, who seemed scarcely to note his arrival, he passed by to where the wife of the proprietor of the mansion was sitting, who very soon engaged him in conversation. Among other questions usually propounded, she asked,

'What wou your business in these parts be, stranger?'

'I am hunting the lost sheep of the house of Israel,' replied the Parson.

'Old man! old man!' cried the woman to her husband, 'old man, I say, I'll lay any thing that the old ram that was here 't'other day belongs to this man.'

The Minister was forced to explain whereupon gazing at him with an air of curiosity and astonishment she rose to her feet and exclaimed 'a preacher! well, you're the first critter of that sort, as was ever in these parts afore, as I've seen— but maby you'd like to take a dram, stranger?'

'No madam, I never drink.'

'Never drink? well raly!'

The men, during this dialogue, continued their game at cards, but as if suddenly struck with the impropriety of such conduct before a minister of the Gospel, they laid down their cards, and the woman addressed the card players with the air of one accustomed to command. 'Looky here, men, ain't you a d— nice set to let a preacher come here and catch you, or I'll break this pine knot over your cursed pates.' It is hardly necessary to add that the room was speedily cleared.

The anecdote above related is literally true, and affords but a fair sample of the character of the settlers on Sandy.—*Knox Post.*

A Character.—Mr. Walsh, in a recent letter to the National Intelligencer, notices the death of Barrere, the famous member of the Committee of Public Safety, whose name is familiar to all acquainted with the details of the French Revolution. He presided in the Convention at the trial of Louis XVI., and voted himself for the death of the monarch. He was the rhetorician of the Reign of Terror—surnamed the Anacreon of the Guillotine. He was born at Tarbes of a distinguished family; gained reputation at the bar and in the provincial republic of letters; was elected to the Constituent Assembly, but did not make a figure until he entered the Convention. *MAD. DE GENLIS* celebrated his polished address and ready talents. No hero of the Revolution excelled him in glibness of speech and the arts of varnishing events and doctrines with both the pen and tongue. It is nearly a miracle that he survived to live in quiet in his birthplace from 1830 until his demise. He suffered imprisonment, expecting to be sent to the scaffold every hour; was about to be deported to Cayenne; owed his escape to Bonaparte's 18th Brumaire; went into banishment in 1816, under the Bourbon edict against all the surviving regicides, and returned when the Revolution of July reopened their country to them and the proscribed Bonapartist. Barrere left manuscript matter for sixty volumes, chiefly memoirs.

A body that weighs one pound on the Earth, would weigh twenty-seven and a half pounds if transported to the Sun, and an ordinary sized man would there weigh four thousand pounds.

A JUDGE PUZZLED.

A Western Judge or Justice of the Peace was recently thus bothered by one of the half wild vagrants of the woods who was brought up with an empty whiskey bottle in his own personal custody.

'So, sir; you're there!' said the Justice. 'So you always come as near the truth as that!' was the reply.

'Silence, sir; where do you come from?'

'You'll be smart if I keep silence and you find out!'

'Don't be impudent, sir; what is your occupation?'

'Look here, Judge, I'll tell you one thing, and I want to do it respectfully.'

'Well, sir.'

'You're d—d impudent yourself.'

'This will not do: where do you come from sir?'

'This side of sundown.'

'Have you an occupation?'

'Reckon.'

'What is it?'

'Bet you a pint o' whiskey I can tell what yours is.'

Do you mean to satisfy me?'

'Certainly, Square; wha'll you have?'

'It is necessary that you should understand that order and peace are necessary in society—Whatever wild freedom you may find in the woods, you are now here in a community of law, and quiet submission will evince wisdom on your part.'

'Squire, I should like to understand you, but you're too big for me. Just say no more about it, and let's go and take a drink.'

'I never drink.'

'What?'

'Never, sir.'

'No sir, never.'

'Sir, I bid you good morning. I have no desire for a further acquaintance with you. *Whooah!* I'm coming!' and the backwoodsman broke out of court.

ROMANCE OF REAL LIFE.

Some years ago, says a foreign journal, the captain of a corsair carried off the wife of a poor wood-cutter residing in the neighborhood of Messina. After detaining her for several months on board his vessel he landed her on an island in the South Seas wholly regardless of what might befall her. It happened that the woman was presented to the savage monarch of the Island, who became enamored of her. He made her his wife, placed her on the throne, and at his death left her the sole sovereign of his domains. By a European vessel which recently touched at the Island, the poor wood-cutter has received intelligence of his wife. She sent him presents of such vast value, that he will be probably one of the wealthiest individuals in Sicily, until it shall please her majesty, his august spouse, to summon him to her court.

A Dutchman, on proceeding to a place from whence he heard cries of distress, discovered one of his neighbors lying under a stone wall, which had fallen upon him and fractured his legs. 'Well den,' said Hons, neighbor Vaulterviken, 'ist ish de matter vid you? But says Mattey, 'vy you see mine conditions vid all dese pig stones upon me, and podd mine legs broke off close py mine poddy.' 'Mein Got,' said Hons, 'ish dat all, you hollowed so like de tivil, I thought you was got de tooth ache.'

'Nabby where's the children's bed?'

'Ain't it thar, mam?'

'No nor the bolsters neither.'

'What!—Oh! now I think on't mam guess Miss Susan put the bolster on for a bustle, and now I think on't again, I reckon Miss Jane Wor'd out the bed, too, kase she hed on an awful big bump this mornin.'—

Oh! these gals mam, never—

'Hush! Nabby.'

Just the thing.