

Columbia Democrat.

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

H. WEBB, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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SOUTH SIDE OF MAIN, A FEW DOORS BELOW MARKET-STREET.

TERMS:

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MISCELLANEOUS.

THE BEAR-CHASE.

FROM THE FRENCH.

One evening a short time after the battle of Fontenoy, (1745,) a group of the king's body-guard was congregated near the Zouave Basin, at Versailles, listening to two of their number discussing a subject which at that period was rarely a matter of controversy in military circles.

"Refuse a duel after a public affront!" exclaimed the tallest of the speakers, whose bronzed features were rendered almost ferocious by a thick red moustache; "it is a stain that all the waters of the deluge would not wash away."

"I repeat, Monsieur de Malatour," replied the other in a calm, polite tone, "that there is more true courage in refusing than in accepting a duel. What is more common than to yield to passion, envy, or vengeance; and what more rare than to resist them? Therefore it is a virtue when exhibited at the price of public opinion; for what costs nothing, is esteemed as worth nothing."

"A marvel! Monsieur d'Argentre, I would advise, if ever the king gives you the command of a company, to have engraven on the sabres of the soldiers, the commandment—'Thou shalt do no murder.'"

"And wherefore not? His majesty would have better servants, and the country fewer plunderers, if we had in our regiments more soldiers and fewer bullies. Take, as an example, him with whom you seem so incensed; has he not nobly avenged what you call an affront by taking, with his own hands, an enemy's colors, while your knaves most likely formed a prudent reserve behind the baggage?"

"Towards themselves have their moments of courage."

"And the brave also their moments of fear."

"The expression is not that of a gentleman."

"It is that of Monsieur de Turenne, whose family equalled either of ours, and who avowed that he was not exempt from such moments. Everybody has heard of his conduct to a brigandage, who boasted in his presence that he had never known fear. He suddenly passed a lighted candle under the speaker's nose, who instantly drew back his head, to the great amusement of the bystanders, who laughed heartily at this singular mode of testing the other's assertion."

"None but a marshal of France had dared to try such a ploy. To our subject, sir, I maintain that your friend is a coward, and you—"

"And I—" repeated d'Argentre, his eyes flashing, and his lips firmly compressed.

"Holloa, gentlemen!" exclaimed a third party, who, owing to the warmth of the argument, had joined the group unperceived. "This is my affair," said he to Monsieur d'Argentre, holding his arm; then turning to his adversary added—"Monsieur de Malatour, I am at your orders."

"In that case, after you, if necessary," said d'Argentre, with his usual calmness.

"By my honor you charm me, gentlemen! Let us go."

"One moment," replied the new comer, who young as he was, wore the cross of St. Louis.

"No remarks. Gentlemen, hasten!"

"Too great haste in such cases evidences less a contempt for death than an anxiety to get rid of his phanion."

"I listen, sir!"

"Monsieur d'Argentre just now stated that the bravest have their moments of fear. Without making as serious his anecdote of Monsieur de Turenne, I shall add that, with the exception of the difference that exists between muscles and nerves; the courage of the duellist is more an affair of habit than of principle; for it is the natural state of man to love peace, if not for the sake of others, at least for himself. Do you wish me to prove it?"

"Enough, sir; we are not here to listen to a sermon."

"Yet a moment. Here is my proposition we are all assembled this evening previous to our leave of absence; I invite you, then, as also these gentlemen present, to a bear-hunt on my estate, or rather amongst the precipices of Clat, in the Eastern Pyrenees. You are very expert, Monsieur de Malatour—you can snuff a candle with a pistol at twenty paces, and you have no equal at the small-sword. Well, I shall place you before a bear, and if you succeed—I do not even say in lodging a ball in his head, but merely in firing upon him I shall submit immediately after to meet you face to face with any weapons you choose to name, since it is only at that price I am to gain your good opinion."

"Are you playing a comedy, sir?"

"Quite the contrary. And I even repeat that this extreme haste shows more the courage of the nerves, than of the true courage arising from principle."

"What guarantee have I, should I accept your proposition, that you will not again endeavor to evade me?"

"My word, sir; which I take all my comrades to witness, and place under the safeguard of their honor."

There ran through his auditory such a buzz of approbation, that De Malatour, though with a bad grace, was obliged to accede to the arrangement. It was then agreed that, on the 1st of September, all present should assemble at the Chateau de Clat.

Whilst the young lord of the manor is making the necessary preparations for their reception, we shall explain the accusation of which he was the object, yet which had not branded him with any mark of disgrace among a class of men so punctilious on the point of honor.

The young Baron de Villette, in entering amongst the gentlemen who formed the household guard of the king of France, carried with him principles which remained uncorrupted amidst all the frivolities of one of the most licentious courts of Europe. Such, however, is the charm of virtue, even in the midst of vice, that his exemplary conduct had not only gained him the esteem of his officers, and the friendship of his companions, but had attracted the attention of the king himself. One alone among his comrades, Monsieur de Malatour, took umbrage at this general favor, and, on the occasion of some trifling expression of respect, publicly insulted him. Villette refused to challenge him, as being contrary to his principles, but determined that this seeming cowardice, in not fighting a well-known duellist, should be redeemed by some action of *eclat* during the campaign just commenced. That moment had arrived; and for his conduct in taking the English colors at the battle of Fontenoy, he received the cross of St. Louis from the king's own hand on the field, the eulogium of Marshal Saxe, and a redoubled equality on the part of De Malatour.

The first care of the young baron on arriving at his estate was to call his major-domo, an old and faithful servant.

"I have business of thee my master," said he, cordially shaking him by the hand.

"Speak, Monseigneur," replied the pareur, who was deeply attached to his young lord; "you know the old hunter is yours to his last drop of blood."

"I never doubted it, my old friend. Did you receive my letter from Paris?"

"Yes, sir, and those gentlemen, your comrades, will have some week before them."

"Are there bears already on the heights then?" asked Villette, extending his hand in the direction of one of the lofty peaks whose summit, covered with snow, glittered in the morning sun.

"Five in all—a complete *menage*—father, mother and children; besides an old bachelor, whom the Spaniards had driven to this side."

"In less than a week we shall go in pursuit of them. Do you know pareur some of my comrades are rather rough sportsmen: there is one of them who is able to snuff a candle with a pistol at twenty paces."

"Easier perhaps than to snuff a bear a four," replied the old man laughing.

"That is what I said also. But as I should wish to judge for myself of his prowess, you must place us together at the same post—at the bridge of Maure, for instance."

"Hum!" said the pareur scratching his ear: "it would better please me to have you elsewhere."

"Why?"

"Because to guard this post a man ought to be in a state of grace for he will be between two deaths—the bears and the precipices."

"I know the one and do not fear the other: thanks to your lessons."

"I am sure of that. But with your leave I should like to guard the bridge myself."

"You are sure then that the bears will pass that way?"

"Sure—yes; but quite sure—no. Recollect that they are sullen and prudent beasts, which never confide their plan of route to any one."

"It is agreed on. I shall guard the bridge with my comrade. Now, go and have the trackers ready?"

"Very well very well," murmured pareur as he retired; "I shall have my eye on them. Eight days, afterwards all those invited, not excepting Monsieur de Malatour—who despite the delicate attentions of the host, preserved a cold reserve—were assembled at the Chateau. The magnificent grandeur of the Pyrenees, their shining summits relieved against the blue sky or Spain was an unlooked for pleasure to the greater number of the guests who for the most part belonged to the rich and fertile plains of the interior."

The morning following their arrival, a body of trackers and scouts provided with all manner of discordant instruments—trumpets, saquepans, drums &c. &c.—were assembled under the walls of the chateau with the pareur at their head; while by his side stood mandrin who proudly guarded a dozen large mastiffs held in leash by his vigorous helpers. The young baron and his friends armed with carbines and hunting knives had scarcely appeared when by a sign from the pareur the whole troop moved silently forward. The dogs themselves seemed to understand the importance of this movement; and nothing was heard but the confused tramp of feet, blending with the noise of the distant torrent, or at intervals the cry of some belated night-bird flying nearly homeward in the doubtful glimmer of the yet opened day.

As the party reached the crest of the mountain which immediately overhung the chateau, the first rays of the sun breaking from the east glanced on the summit of the Pyrenees, and suddenly illuminating the landscape, discovered beneath them a deep valley, covered with majestic pines which murmured in the fresh breeze of the morning.

Opposite to them the foaming waters of a cascade fell for some hundreds of feet through a cleft which divided the mountain from the summit to the base. By one of those rapines of nature which testify the primitive convulsions of the globe the chasm was surmounted by a natural bridge—the piles of granite at each side being joined by one immense flat rock almost seeming to verify the fable of the Titans; for it appeared impossible that these enormous blocks of stone could have ever been raised

to such an elevation by human agency. In the death struggle, to where they snarled legends were attached to the place stood. All this was the work of an instant. The knees of the hardy old pareur shook with emotion at the except of his young master; as for Malatour, his livid paleness, and the convulsive shuddering of his limbs, testified the state of his mind.

"Take your arms," said the young baron, quickly replacing in his hands the carbine; "there are our comrades—they must not see you unarmed and, pareur, not a word of all this."

"Look!" said he to his companions as they gathered around, pointing to the monstrous beasts—one to each. Now Monsieur de Malatour, I wait your orders, and am ready to give the satisfaction you require."

The latter made no reply, but reached out his hand, which Villette cordially shook.

"That evening a banquet was given to celebrate the double victory. Towards the end of the repast a toast to 'the vanquishers' was proposed, and immediately accepted. Monsieur d'Argentre, glass in hand, rose to pledge it, when Malatour, also rising, held his arm, exclaiming, 'To the sole vanquisher of the day!—to our noble host! It was he alone who killed the two bears, and it, through his generosity, I have allowed the illusion to last so long, it was simply for this reason; the affront which I gave him was a public one—the reparation ought to be public likewise. I now declare that Monsieur de Villette is the bravest of the brave, and that I shall maintain it towards all and against all.'"

"This time, at least, I shall not take up your guntlet," said Monsieur d'Argentre.

"There's a brave young man!" cried the pareur, whom his master had admitted to his table, and who endeavored to conceal a furtive tear. "Nothing could better prove to me, sir, that, with a little experience, you will be as calm in the presence of bears, as you are, I am sure, in the face of an enemy."

A SUCKER IN SEARCH OF THE PLANNER'S HOUSE.

BY EVENING.

"Match pictures" are always agreeable to the eye of taste; why should not match sketches be equally so. A Sucker in a warm Bath, recently published in the Revue, called, the other evening the relation of a sucker's adventures in search of the Planter's House, and thus we give them:

This Sucker was a very important Sucker—in his own important events he found himself suddenly called upon to visit St. Louis, a place that he had a mysterious sort of an idea was 'some' that was all. He set out, accompanied by an equally verdant companion; and in due course found himself in the 'Mound City,' making very consequential inquiries after 'the best hotel.' Now, the 'fast hotel' in Higgsville was, as our Sucker that he had a very adequate idea of 'teeth bidding'; but to one on 'en occupying 'a hull square' was entirely too extensive a conception. When, therefore, the 'Planter's' was pointed out to him, he gravely marched by the principal entrance, taking that was the Court House, and bringing up at the druggist's shop in the basement on the corner of Pine street, he very importantly asked his friend to enter, went up to the soda counter, and 'reckoned they'd take a little wiskey.'"

"We don't sell liquor, sir," said the druggist.

"Temperance house!" remarked the Sucker, aside, and rather patronizingly to his companion.

"We'll, them, Squire, we'll take a room, I reckon."

"No!"—no—I haint rined nothin' was the reply, but the Sucker's heart misgave him, there was certainly some mysterious connection between that green string and the interrogatory just put to him, and turning into bed again he pondered the matter over abundantly until he was startled out of his repose into his boots by the door being opened.

"I was very full wabie, but the Sucker and his friend got seats. Clash dash,

"Oh, you're in search of the Planter's House—entrance just above, gentlemen. The Sucker scraped himself out rather confusedly, and the next visit he paid was our friend, Dr. Morgan, where a couch being in one corner of the office, he thought he was right, our course. He probably would have had his boots off had not the Doctor entered at the moment to repeat to him that the entrance was 'juth above.' By this time the Sucker's confidence in his intuitive knowledge of things was rather staggered. He went out into the middle of the street for a more accurate observation, thrice convinced that those high steps and 'almighty big door,' where the folks (lawyers of course,) were standing belonged only to the Court House! He forthwith marched with his friend to the other basement corner, [Chestnut street,] and doling into the stage office he demanded 'a room for two,' forthwith.

"Cartrily, sir, in what direction?" was the response.

"Why, in a lying down direction. I reckon!" exclaimed the tired traveller, beginning, to 'trile' considerably.

"Lying down?" repeated the office keeper; "you can have seats, sir, wherever you are going."

"Seats, thunder! We have just rid the hull way from Higgsville, by smash and we want a bed, and if you haven't got a room, just say so: Call this yer a fast hotel!" and the indignant Sucker took three strides accompanied by so many jerks of his elbows—premonitory symptoms of a 'tar up' generally.

The stage agent by this time had 'the hang' of the matter, and he very politely told the mistaken Sucker that the Planter's House entrance was 'just below.'

"Just above" and 'jest below,' and the Court House right in the middle!" cried the poor fellow, the importance taken clean out of him. "I tell you what stranger, if you have got a Planter's House in this district, I'd jest thank you to put it out."

The stage agent did so, but it was only after diverse suspicious stares at him that the sucker seemed to be satisfied that he was not again to be victimized. Up he went, with his innocent friend, and looking cautiously round, his eyes rested upon the ranges of pigeon holes, numbered according to the respective rooms, and one half of them containing notes or cards for the boarders.

"Post Office, by 'Hooah!" cried he, completely 'sawed,' as he would say, and the mere object of meeting in the lobby a more experienced friend from his section, kept him from rushing out of the house.—Masters were explained, names registered, and a double bedded room was reached at last by the excited travellers. The beds were all right;—the furniture 'fust rate'—but there was an unaccountable green string and tassel hanging against the wall, which kept Sucker the first from taking his nap. But remained to 'get the hang' of this, also, he gave it a gentle pull or two, when suddenly a tap was given at the door and a very genteel visitor walked in upon him. The Sucker made him a polite, told him 'howdy do,' and asked him to 'take a cheer.'"

"Did you ring, sir?" said the visitor, deprecatingly.

"No!"—no—I haint rined nothin' was the reply, but the Sucker's heart misgave him, there was certainly some mysterious connection between that green string and the interrogatory just put to him, and turning into bed again he pondered the matter over abundantly until he was startled out of his repose into his boots by the door being opened.

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