

# Raffman's Journal.

BY S. B. ROW.

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## A PRETTY LOVE SONG.

I love you—'tis the simplest way  
The thing I feel to tell;  
Yes, if I told it all the day,  
You'd never guess how well.  
You're my comfort and my light;  
My very life you seem;  
I think of you all day—all night  
'Tis but of you I dream.  
There's pleasure in the lightest word  
That you can speak to me;  
My soul is like the Solon chord,  
And vibrates still to thee.  
I never read the love-song yet,  
So thrilling, fond, or true,  
But in my own heart I have met  
Some kinder thought of you.  
I bless the shadow on your face,  
The light upon your hair;  
I like, for hours to sit and trace  
The passing changes there.  
I love to hear your voice's tone,  
Although you should not say  
A single word, to dream upon  
When that had died away.  
O, you are kindly as the beam  
That warms where'er it plays;  
And you are gentle as a dream  
Of happy future days.  
And you are strong to do the right,  
And swift the wrong to flee;  
And, if you were not half so bright,  
You'd be all the world to me.

## HOLY PLACES IN BETHLEHEM.

From the New York Observer.  
The site of Bethlehem is peculiar. It stands upon a hill and is surrounded by other hills of equal height. Some of these are terraced to the summit, and being thickly set with the fig and olive, have a charming appearance. In former times when the science of cultivation was better understood, and the people were able and willing to adorn and enrich the land this must have been one of the most beautiful regions in Palestine, and it is pleasant to mark it as so inviting a place for the advent of the Lord of Life. In ancient times, the whole country round about this, though rocky, and apparently barren, as much of the land of Judea appears to be, was rendered exceedingly productive, by means of terraces, and must have abounded in grapes, figs and olives.—These, with bread, probably constituted the principal part of the food of the inhabitants; their living is essentially the same at this day. The village of Bethlehem contains from twelve to fifteen hundred souls—souls these people have—and the Christian traveller enters its street—it is mostly on one long street, with painful reflections, as he thinks of being in the city of David and the native place of the son of God, while the people are wholly given to idolatry or sunk in superstition so gross and sensual as to make their views of the way of life by Jesus Christ as dark and dangerous as if the light of the gospel had never broken in for a single moment on their minds. A few years ago there were several families here who followed the false prophet Mahomet, but so frequent and so fierce became the difficulties between them and the others, who bore the name of Christian, that the Pasha took a very summary mode of settling the disputes—he drove all the Mahometans out of the place, and tore down their houses. If this was a hard, it was a very effectual mode of disposing of a troublesome subject, and it shows to what a depth of subjection the inhabitants of this sacred country are reduced. Now the Bethlehemites are, all of them, Roman Catholic, Greek and Armenian Christians, living in no better harmony of feeling with one another than they did with the Arabs, but they are restrained by the arm of power from outbreaks which disturb the peace of the town. They have their three convents within the same outer walls, known by the names of the several sects, and each claiming the sanctity that belongs to the possession of the Holy places. In the same great enclosure also, is a vast edifice, supposed to be the church built by Helena, the celebrated mother of the Emperor Constantine, though others say that her church was destroyed by the Moslems, and the present temple was erected on the same site. And this church, it is held, is built on the spot where our Lord was born. Under the church I entered the chapel in which they showed us the pretended manger, or rather one made to represent it, for the original, they say, was carried to Rome, in which the infant Jesus was laid. A few feet from the manger is an altar, occupying the spot where the Magi stood when they offered their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. A brilliant star, to represent the one which stood over the place, where the young child was, now marks the spot where it is believed that the Saviour was born. In my travels in Italy and the East, I have often found that the stables for the cattle are fitted up with comfortable places for beds, after the manner of the berths on shipboard, and in them the men who have the care of the horses are accustomed to sleep. If the hotel is full of guests, any one would prefer to take a bed in the stable where he would be protected from the night air, rather than lie out, and it was not, therefore, so unusual and trying a circumstance, as it appears at first view, that Joseph and Mary should be compelled to take refuge for the night in the stable. The same cause, the registry of all persons who belonged originally in Bethlehem and must now resort here to be taxed, or enrolled for taxation, might have brought others here on the same errand, and made the inns inadequate to furnish beds. And it is not an unusual practice, even now, in this same country, to use one half of the house for a stable, and the other for the

family, while there is no sign of a partition between them. I have slept in this way myself, and as one manger had no horse before it, Antonio occupied it for his bed, and made no complaint of his lodging. The neighing of one of the horses awakened me in the night, but Antonio, whose ears were much nearer to the animals, did not hear it.

But it Joseph and Mary had been persons of wealth and consideration, undoubtedly "room in the inn" would have been made for them, and the fact that they were constrained to resort to the stable, and especially under their peculiar circumstances of trial and peril, shows the humiliation to which the Son of God became subject, in taking upon himself the form of man!

And now we are in the midst of those scenes which have been the occasion of conflicts involving not the peace of the Bethlehem community only, nor of this Holy Land only, but of nations and the world. The present war, convulsing Europe and threatening the stability of thrones and dynasties, had its origin in the miserable contests among these miserable religionists about the possession of these places, which they suppose are identified as hallowed by the birth of Christ. If the disputing parties loved the Saviour and cherished his spirit, there would be more apology for the pertinacity with which they cling to the spot where his infant form was laid, and I confess to a strong feeling of sympathy with those who are powerfully moved when they stand on ground that is memorable for such an event as this. But the quarrels of these superstitious people were so incessant and violent, that the government, and a Mahometan government at that, was compelled to interfere, and to apportion to each its share, strictly forbidding all interference of one with the other. Thus the manger is in the hands of the Roman Catholics, and the Greeks and Armenians have nothing to do with it. The altar of the wise men is common to all, but may be used in regular turns. The altar over the star belongs exclusively to the Greeks and Armenians, the former having the precedence. Around the star, sixteen golden pendant lamps are kept constantly burning, of which the Armenians have six, the Greeks six, and the Roman Catholics four. Into the great church, the possession of which is divided between the Greeks and Armenians, these monks enter by different doors, and maintain their separate worship within the same walls. The Roman Catholics have no other privilege in it, but to pass through on their way to the chapel below. But the division of the holy ground is carried even further than this, and the cave where they pretend that Joseph and Mary were hid, previous to their going to Egypt with the infant Jesus, belongs to the Romanists, while that of the shepherds to whom the angels appeared, is given to the Greeks. But if any of these three contending sects could get power, they would quickly drive out the other two, and such will be the result when the French take possession of Turkey, and in behalf of the Pope of Rome, assume the protectorate of Palestine, which will then be a Roman Catholic See.

But how changed the birth-place of Jesus from what it was on that night when Mary took refuge here. The "Grotto of the Nativity," as the place is now called, is a gorgeous chapel, and thirty-two elegant lamps, the gifts of sovereigns and princes, shed lustre over the polished marble manger and gilded altar, and the paintings that represent the Magi offering their gifts to the holy child. Here the pilgrims from other lands were prostrating themselves before the altar, and when they had finished their devotions, I followed them up into the church where the priest gave them the sacrament of our Lord's Supper from a basket of bread, talking and laughing with them as they received it, and now and then slapping them on the back, in the excitement of his glee!—Blessed Master! do they thus degrade the mystery of thy death on the very place of thy birth!

And then with feelings more of disgust than of reverence, with a sort of sickness of heart, I was led to the cell of Jerome, where he lived for years and translated the Old Testament into the Latin tongue—and then to the tomb of Eusebius, and still on till we were shown the spot where by Herod's order the children were slain. And here the folly of tradition became intolerable, as the monk showed us the skeleton hand of one of these little ones, set in a frame and covered with gauze. I turned away relieved to get out of the presence of such fellows, and anxious to be allowed alone to wander and meditate among these scenes that are more sacred to me than to these relic-mongering monks and superstitious pilgrims.

FRANKLIN was an observing and sensible man and his conclusions were seldom incorrect. He said that a newspaper and Bible in every house, and a good school in every district—all studied and appreciated as merited—were the principal supporters of virtue, morality and civil liberty.

A lady made a complaint to Frederick the Great, King of Prussia.—"Your Majesty," said she, "my husband treats me badly."  
"That is none of my business," replied the King. "But he speaks ill of you," said the lady. "That," he replied, "is none of your business."

## THE WIDOW'S BEAU.

Services had commenced in the neat little sanctuary, which the inhabitants of Harlem had consecrated to the service of God. The minister had read the psalms and scripture lessons, and had repeated the first line of the opening hymn. The eyes of the people were fixed intently upon him, for he was not only a sound and eloquent preacher, but he was a fine looking one, too, and thus enchaind not only the attention of the true, but the false worshippers. The house was very still—the clear, melancholy tones of the preacher were the only sounds that throbbd on the balmy golden air, which the midsummer's Sabbath morn had breathed into that holy place.

The first syllable of the second line was trembling on his lips, when a rustle at the door, and the entrance of two persons, a lady and a gentleman, dissolved the charm. In a second every eye turned from the pulpit to the broad aisle, and watched with more than ordinary interest, the progress of the couple. A most searching ordeal were they subjected to, and when fairly and quietly seated in the first pew, immediately in front of the pulpit, what a nudging of elbows there was—ay, and how many whispers, too.

In vain the sound, the good, the eloquent, the handsome Mr. B. sought again to steal the attention of his hearers. They had no eyes, no thoughts for anybody else but widow C. and widow C.'s young gentlemanly and dashing attendant.

How she had cheated them. Hadn't she said she didn't feel as though she could ever wear anything but mourning? And in spite of these protestations, hadn't she come out all at once, dressed in white, and walked into the church in broad daylight, leaning on the arm of a young gentleman.

Yes, indeed she had. She would have pleaded guilty to all these charges, grave ones as they were, and to the last how many witnesses had been subpoenaed! She was actually dressed in white, with open corsage, displaying an elaborately wrought chignon, drapery-trimmed with the richest Mechlin lace, under-sleeves of the same expensive material, with a white lace hat with orange-buds and flowers, with kid gloves and light gaiters—such was the description every lady had on her tongue, to repeat over as soon as the service was ended.

And the gentleman—he was dressed in style didn't he wear white pants of the latest pattern, and a white vest, and a coat of "satin finish," and white kids, too; and didn't he sport a massive chain, and didn't he gaze often and lovingly on the fair features beside him?

Ah, yes, he did so, and there was no further room to doubt. Widow C. had cheated them. She had won a beau, laid aside her mourning, put on a bridal attire and was going to be married in church. But who the beau was, and from whence he came, it was difficult to solve.

Services proceeded. The choir sung and the minister prayed and preached—the people wondered when the ceremony would take place. But to their utter astonishment they were left to wonder.

For when the benediction was pronounced, widow C. and the strange gentleman walked with the rest of the congregation quietly out of the church. When they reached the pavement, he offered her his arm very gracefully, and she placed her hand very confidentially on the beautiful coat sleeve, as they passed on.

What a morning that was in Harlem! What a world of conjectures, surmises, inquiries and doubts rolled over and over in the brains of not only gossiping ladies, but sober, matter-of-fact gentlemen. The like of such a thing had never occurred in the annals of the village—there was something new under the sun—a lady had a beau, and nobody knew it.

Widow C. didn't your ears burn that day? And we wonder they didn't drop off; surely they must have been crisp and crimson.

The Rev. Mr. B. preached to a crowded house that afternoon; no compliment to him, though. Every one was sure the wedding would take place then, but everybody was sadly disappointed; and if tongues had run at railroad speed before, they travelled then on electric wires. The minister might have preached in Greek that day, and the sermon would have been quite as edifying. But one subject occupied the village mind—the widow's beau.

It actually seemed, too, as though the lady tried to make all the talk she could. After tea, arm in arm with the strange gentleman, she walked the whole length of the village, and away out into the country, and never returned till the moon was high.

If she knew it, apparently she didn't care, for the next day she went sailing with her beau, and the next day rambled with him off to the woodlawn, and the next forenoon went with him in a carriage to the railroad station; and there not only wept as she parted from him, but actually embraced and kissed him!

"What! in broad day light!" exclaimed grandma W. "Well, if I ever heard or seen the like on't."

Little Nell, the old lady's youngest grand child, wondered to herself if it was any worse in broad daylight than at other times. Perhaps you will wonder, too. We did at least.

There was a large attendance that afternoon at the weekly meeting of the village sewing society. Everybody went that could possibly leave home. And what a chattering there was when the bustling of assembling was over.—There was but one topic, but that was all-engrossing—the widow's beau—for the gentleman must be her beau—or at least ought to be.

Everybody had something to tell, something to wonder at. But suddenly every magic tongue was hushed; a universal stroke of palsy seemed to have fallen on the group as, looking up, they perceived the very lady about whom they were conversing so eagerly, standing in the doorway.

"Good afternoon, ladies," said she in her usual quiet way; "I am glad to see so large and happy a gathering. It is a beautiful day for our meeting."

And then she proceeded to the table and helped herself to a block of patchwork, inquiring for the sewing silk, which having received, she sat down in the only vacant chair, and commenced hemming a red bird with a yellow wing on a very green twig which latter had already been hemmed on to a square piece of white cloth, and the whole when completed, was designed to form the twentieth part of a bed-spread. She seemed all engrossed with the bird's bill, and spoke to no one. Everybody wondered if she had heard what they were saying when she came in; but her placid countenance soon reassured the most fearful, and every one longed to commence a personal attack.

Old grandmother W. was the first to venture. She meant to do up the matter very delicately, and in so round about a way that the lady would not suspect her of curiosity. So she began by praising Mrs. C.'s dress.

"Why, it's really a beauty. Where did you get it?"

"I bought it."

"Here?" inquired the old lady.

"No."

"Where then?"

"In the city, last spring."

"Oh, you did, did you? But I thought you was never going to dress in anything but black again?"

All scrutinized the lady's face in search of a blush, but it continued as usual, while she answered—"I did think and say so once, but I have finally altered my mind."

"You have, eh! What made you?"

"Oh, I had good reasons."

Here the hearers and lookers-on winked and looked very expressive at each other.

"But did you not spoil your beautiful white dress the other night, wearing it away up to the burying-ground?"

"I did not wear it."

Here was a damper for the old lady. She had such a long lecture to read on extravagance, and she determined to do it, too, when unfortunately for her eloquent strain, Mrs. C.'s dress hung up in her wardrobe all the time, and she had worn an old black silk.

After a while the old lady took a fresh start. She would not be balked again. She would find out all about that beau before she went home, "that she would." She began by saying—"Your company went away this morning, didn't he?"

"He did."

"He did not stay very long, did he?"

"Not so long as I wished him to stay," was the reply. And how the ladies did look at each other. It was as good as a confession.

"When did he come?"

"Saturday evening."

"Were you looking for him?"

"I had been expecting him for a fortnight or more."

"Why, du tell if you had then, and you never told on't either. Had he any business in the place?"

"He had," replied the widow.

"What was it?" This was rather more direct and blunt than the old lady had meant to put, and she forthwith apologized.

But the widow interrupted her by saying—"O, I'd as lief you'd know as not: he came to see me."

O, widow C., your good name did go down then. Be careful what you say next, or you'll have only a remnant of character left to go home with, and remnants go very cheap.

"He did, did he? and he didn't come for nothing else, then. But was you glad to see him?" queried the old lady.

"Indeed I was. It was one of the happiest moments of my existence."

"Well, well," said the old lady, hardly knowing how to frame the next question; "well, well, he is a very good-looking man, any way."

"I think so, too, and he's not only good-looking, but he's good-hearted—one of the best men I ever knew," observed the widow.

"You don't say so! But is he rich?"

"Worth a hundred thousand or so," said the lady earnestly.

"Why, du tell if he is. Why, you will live like a lady, won't you? But what is his name?" inquired the old lady, whose curiosity was now raised to a high pitch.

"Henry Macon."

"Macon! Macon! why, wasn't that your name before you was married?"

"It was."

"Then he's a connection, is he?"

"Du tell who he is then. Not a cousin, I hope. I never did think much of a marriage between cousins."

"He is not my cousin."

"He isn't? Not your cousin? But what connection is he? Du tell now?"

"He is my youngest brother!"

If ever there was rapid progress made in sewing and knitting by any circle of ladies, it was by those composing this society, for the next fifteen minutes. Not a word was uttered, nor an eye raised. Had the latter been done, and the roguish and expressive glances seen which passed between Mrs. C. and the minister, who, unobserved, had stood on the threshold as a silent spectator and a curious hearer, perhaps—mind you, we only say perhaps—they might have guessed more correctly the name, character, standing and profession of the widow's beau.

## ROMISH PRIESTCRAFT IN FRANCE.

From Gallian's Messenger, March 5th.

An extraordinary trial has, during the last month, occupied the Court of Orleans. The facts of it were these: A Mlle. Bulnois, who was born in 1772, inherits from her parents, who were large landowners and manufacturers, a very great fortune, and she increased it by her economy, and by carrying on for some years the manufactures which they had established. Her education, however, was very imperfect, and her intelligence by no means great, and she was very superstitious. Some priests and Sisters of Charity wormed themselves into her confidence, and, under the guise of religion, gained a complete ascendancy over her. In 1818, having retired from business, she, by their advice, removed her residence from Sarcus, her native place, in the department of the Oise, to Tours, which then possessed the reputation of being a very religious town.

She had two persons living with her—one a sister of charity, the other the daughter of a man named Leveque, who acted as her steward; but after a year or two another Sister of Charity instilled herself in the house. Shortly after her arrival at Tours she purchased an old convent of the Feuillans, and took up her residence in it. She was there constantly surrounded by priests, and they pleased her greatly by saying mass in her chapel. She was also a frequent visitor at the convent of the Petit Saint Martin, a branch of the great house of Picpus at Paris; she moreover, after a while, charged Father Philibert chaplain of the convent, who was her own confessor, with the management of her property. In 1828, in compliance with the recommendation of Father Philibert, the nuns, the Sisters of Charity and priests who surrounded her, she took up her residence in the convent of the Petit Saint Martin.

She then transferred to a priest who was the representative of the Convent of Picpus, the proprietorship of Les Feuillans, acknowledging that she had "sold" the place to him for 40,000 fr., though in reality, no such sum was, nor any other, ever paid. Some time after he executed deeds, by which she "sold" for 150,000 fr., to the Bishop of Chalcedonia, Superior of the convent of Picpus, a valuable estate at a place called Menevilliers, and she acknowledged having received the sum in question in cash; but not one farthing of it was ever really paid to her. In addition to this she gave or sold to Leveque, her steward at Sarcus, all the real property she possessed there; but this man was to a certain extent, the pretence of the community of Picpus. Differences subsequently arose between him and the community as to the manner in which the Sarcus property should be divided between them, and these differences came to the knowledge of Madame Bulnois' family.

They were greatly surprised to learn that she had made any disposition of her property at all, as they knew she had fallen into a state of imbecility, and as they had supposed that the religious community in which she was at Tours would, as her natural protector, have prevented her from doing anything of the kind. They instituted inquiries, and were astounded to find that she had done away, not only with the property at Sarcus, but with the estate at Menevilliers, and Les Feuillans at Tours. They immediately took proceedings for having her placed under interdiction, and one of the law courts, after making inquiries, and subjecting her to interrogatories, declared that she was undoubtedly so imbecile as to be incapable of managing her own affairs, and it charged one of her nephews with the administration of them. This was in January, 1847, and in July, 1848, the poor lady died. Her nephews and nieces, as heirs at law, then took proceedings before different courts to obtain the restitution of her real property; and the result of this was that the Bishop of Chalcedonia, the community of Picpus to restore the convent of Les Feuillans, and Leveque nearly all the donations and purchases which she pretended had been made at Sarcus.

But these restorations were only of the real property, and her heirs found that from the time she went to Tours up to her death, the rents of her houses and lands, the capital she had possessed, and the sums she had received from various resources, had gone into the hands of the authorities of the Convent of Le Petit Saint Martin. As well as they could make out, the total was 528,000 fr.—namely, 384,504 fr. in capital and 244,000 fr. in rents. They accordingly demanded the restoration of that sum with an addition of 100,000 fr. as damages. To enforce their demand they bro't an action before the Civil Tribunal of Orleans against the Bishop of Chalcedonia, as superior of the community of Picpus, and against Mmes. de Beaussais, Jobert, Nemcaie, and Coudrin, superiors of the convent of Petit St. Martin, during the time Mlle. Bulnois was in it. But the tribunal decided that the persons could not, for various technical reasons, be sued as the representatives of the community, and dismissed the action.

It was on appeal against this decision that the matter was brought before the Imperial Court. The representatives of Mme. Bulnois, after contending that the personages in question were responsible for the Picpus community, adduced a number of facts to prove that their aged aunt was in such a state of mind as not to be able to dispose of her property, and that the priests and nuns by whom she was surrounded had taken undue advantage of that state to despoil her.

On the part of the Archbishop and the other defendants it was vehemently denied that they had exercised unfair influence on the old woman to get her property from her, and it was stated that they appealed to the Court of Cassation against the judgments ordering them to restore Les Feuillans and Menevilliers; also that the decision with respect to the Sarcus property concerned Leveque and not them. On the part of the Archbishop it was further represented that he is the spiritual and not the temporal superior of Picpus, and consequently not responsible for its temporal acts; and on the part of the ladies it was urged that they were not responsible in law. The counsel of the defendants, however, delivered a glowing eulogium on the Archbishop of the Picpus community. The Court said that the first point it had to decide was whether or not the Archbishop and the lady superiors of the community were, under the circumstances, the proper parties to proceed against; and it decided that they were, and that consequently the decision of the Tribunal declaring the contrary must be quashed. With regard to the merits of the case, the Court said that the facts alleged were such as to call for inquiry, and it authorized the plaintiffs to produce proof of their allegation.

A FREE FIGHT.—We learn from the *True Democrat*, the organ of the Sham Democracy of Millin county, that the Democracy of that county have a free fight on hand. The Democratic Commissioners of the county contracted quietly with Messrs. Myers and Gutshall, of Carlisle, to build a Jail for \$20,000, contract was closed, 100 citizens of the county have published a card in the *Democrat*, alleging that H. R. Noll will do the same work for \$18,000 according to the plan and specifications of the Commissioners, and these citizens pledge themselves that he will give abundant security. Mr. Wm. Macklin, of McVernon, says in a card that he will do the work for \$17,000, and give ample security.

Mr. Samuel Hollman, of Harrisburg, has authorized the *Democrat* to say that he will put up a better building on a better plan than the one agreed on for the sum of \$20,000. Remonstrances are circulating all over the county, and the people are signing freely against this last out-rage of the Sham Democracy.

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, in this country, was organized in Philadelphia about the year 1698. Its first pastor was Rev. Jeddiah Andrews, who continued to exercise his ministry in that charge until his death, in 1747. The first Presbytery was organized under the name of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, about the year 1705; and the first person licensed and ordained by this body to preach was Mr. John Boyd, in the following year. The first synod was formed in Philadelphia in 1717. The first general assembly was held in Philadelphia in 1789, and was composed of four synods and sixteen Presbyteries.

There is a beautiful figure of Winthrop's, in reference to our Constitution, where he says: "Like one of those wondrous rocking stones raised by the Druids, which the finger of a child might vibrate to its centre, yet the might of an army could not move it from its place; our Constitution is so nicely poised, that it seems to sway with every breath of passion, yet so firmly based in the hearts and affections of the people, that the wildest storms of treason and fanaticism break over it in vain."

THERE were in the U. S. Navy, during the past year, 48 resignations, 45 deaths, 13 dismissals, 48 dropped, and 128 placed retired or reserved list.