

Franklin Repository.

WASHINGTON.

Brief Life in Washington—Starting Exposition of Inner Life in the Departments—The Case of Lewis and Miss Duvall—Ladies Cautioned Against Accepting Positions in Washington.

Correspondence of the Franklin Repository.

WASHINGTON CITY, May 7, 1864.

The last week has been one of great excitement in this community, caused chiefly by rumors of misconduct among the officials and lewdness of some of the male and female clerks of the Treasury, and the movements of Grant's army advancing upon Richmond.

Of the Treasury matter, I have to say: All the posted residents of Washington are aware that for a year past numerous stories have been afloat of the unchasteness of our public men both in and out of Congress who have been said to have recommended women of immoral and disunited tendencies for positions in the different departments of the government, and that some women of chaste character have had improper proposals made to them by those through whom they sought position. There is some foundation for these statements, but not to the extent to which they have been currently reported.

A squabble having arisen in Congress last week respecting some matters in the Treasury, some of the copperheads openly declared that there were transactions transpiring there which it was indecent to detail in the presence of the ladies in the galleries, and a committee was appointed to investigate the charges made chiefly against S. M. Clark. Pending this investigation, Col. Baker, the detective of the War and Treasury Departments, elicited some statements, which he assumed amounted to the charge of attempt at abortion, upon the person of Miss Maggie A. Duvall, against a young man named Lewis (who was said to have seduced her) and Miss Ella Jackson. Both the young women have been until recently, and the young man formerly was employed in the Treasury.

On Wednesday Miss Duvall, who had been confined to her residence for nearly two months, died. Immediately Col. Baker entered complaint against the aforesaid parties, Miss Jackson was arrested, but Lewis could not be found, and a post mortem examination of the body of Miss Duvall was ordered. This examination resulted in a verdict that she had died of pulmonary consumption, and that there were no indications of her having been *exciente*, or of any attempt at abortion having been made upon her.

Miss Jackson is still held in custody, and the investigation has not yet been concluded. This is indeed a sad case, pandering as it does to the baser passions of many, and sorely distressing the better portion of those who appreciate its most deplorable features and shudder at the thought of its effects upon the thousands of unprotected females in this city, as well as upon the smaller circle of those whose reputation and feelings are directly assailed by it.

The evidence seems to indicate that Lewis and Miss Duvall were guilty of criminal intercourse, and it is said there is other evidence of similar transactions. I have no doubt that this is true. Indeed so generally is this matter credited, that many women who should undoubtedly be above reproach, find it difficult to obtain social recognition or tolerance in some circles, and I am free to say that I think no one who has any regard for a young female friend should allow her to come to this city to reside or seek employment in any of the departments, unprotected. Of those already here, and especially of those old enough elsewhere to occupy an independent social position, I have to say, in the language of one of the city papers, "it is the duty of the public to refrain from stigmatizing any against whom no proof is adduced of complicity with this deplorable affair, or any similar, with suspicions of impropriety of conduct. And all, both male and female, who are conscious of entire personal freedom from any grounds of such suspicion should feel steeled against the shafts of slanderous words or thoughts by the arrow of their own rectitude."

The publicity which was given to the Duvall affair I regard as premature, unnecessary, and wholly unjustifiable. But it is entirely in accordance with the general conduct of this detective Baker. I hope that he will be ready, and more successful than he has been (notwithstanding the terrible expose) in this case in ferreting out the guilt of parties more prominent, and whose offenses are more heinous than those of the parties implicated in this affair of criminal passion.

Young Lewis, who is not to be found, is said to have been residing for some time in Arkansas, and was formerly an officer, brave and faithful, in a Pennsylvania regiment. Should there be no further evidence of seduction, or attempt at abortion than has been thus far adduced, he will not be punished legally, if found. But the sad fruits of his criminal indulgence of passion will haunt him through life and embitter the closing years of his father's most honorable and eminently useful life.

S. C.

OLD THINGS.—Give me the old songs, those rustic bursts of melody which thrilled the lyres of the inspired poets and minstrels of long ago. Every note has borne on the air a tale of joy and rapture—of sorrow and sadness! They tell of days gone by, and time hath given them a voice which speaks to us of those who once breathed those melodies—of what they now are, and what we soon shall be. My heart loves those melodies; they be mine to hear till life shall end, and as I "launched my boat" upon the sea of eternity, may their echoes be wafted to my ear to cheer me on my passage from the scenes of earth and earthland!

Give me the old path where we have wandered and culled the flowers of love and friendship in the days of "Auld Lang Syne," sweetest of the dells whose echoes have answered to our voices; whose turf is not a stranger to our footsteps, and whose rills have in childhood's days reflected back our forms; and those of our merry play-fellows from whom we have parted and meet no more in the old nooks we loved so well. May the old paths be watered with Heaven's own dew, and be green forever in my memory!

Give me the old house, upon whose stairs we used to hear light footsteps, and under whose porch a merry laugh seems to mingle with the winds that whistle through old trees, beneath whose branches lie the graves of those who once trod the halls, and made the chambers ring with glee. And O! above all, give me the old friends—hearts bound to mine in life's sunshiny hours, and a link so strong that all the storms of earth might not break it asunder—spirits congenial, whose hearts thro' life have throbbed in unison with our own! O, when death shall still this heart, I would not ask for aught more sacred to hollow my dust than the ashes of an old friend. May my funeral dirge be chanted by the old friends I love so fondly, who have not yet passed away to the spirit's bright home!

SOMETIMES.—It is a sweet song, flowing to me from amongst the topmost boughs of the heart, and fills the air with joy and gladness of the soul; of birds who sing when the summer morning comes out of the darkness, and the day is born on the mountains. We have all our possessions in the future, which we call "sometimes." Beautiful flowers and sweet singing birds are there; only our hands seldom grasp the one, or our ears hear, except in faint fitful strains, the other. But, oh, reader, be of good cheer for to all the good, there is a golden "sometimes!" When the hills and valleys of time are passed, when the wear and fever, the disappointment and the sorrow of life over; then there is a place and the rest appointed of God. A homestead over whose blessed roof falls no shadow of even clouds; across whose threshold the voice of sorrow is never heard; built upon the eternal hills, and standing with the spires and pinnacles of celestial beauty, among the palm trees of the city on high, those who love God shall rest under the shadows, where there is no more sorrow, nor pain, nor sound of weeping—"sometimes!"

AN ANECDOTE OF GEN. GRANT.—It is said that when Gen. Grant was going down from Washington to the front one day last week, the train having attached to it the special car stopped at Brandy Station. Some soldiers who were waiting to board the train asked if they could get into the car. "No," was the answer of an officer; "this is Gen. Grant's special car." Gen. Grant, who was sitting by the window, promptly thrust out his head and said: "Gen. Grant occupies only one seat; the soldiers can ride."

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WASHINGTON, May 13, 1864.

The week about to close has been one of the most exciting that I have ever experienced, and in listening for further news from the front, answering telegrams, helping the wounded, and hunting after the fate of friends, we were not idle, nor will we be for some time to come. Already 10,000 men from the battle field have been brought to our Hospitals and more than that number still remain behind. Of the first few thousand that arrived, at least one-half were "skedaddlers," embracing officers and men, who represent themselves as wounded, but upon examination are found to be perfectly sound, and who are only trying to get away from the smell of gunpowder. Already over 1500 of these have been picked up by the Provost Guard to be forwarded to their regiments, and the Surgeons are making an examination throughout the Hospitals for the balance. On one boat yesterday forty were arrested, and on another one hundred and thirty-six. It is an amusing

scene to stand near the wharf where the board of detectives and examining officers are stationed and see them overhaul and ventilate the deceptions practiced by these weak-kneed "skedaddlers." A private in a New York regiment amputated the left leg of his pants and bandaged his ankle, yet while hobbling along the wharf he was "spotted" and invited to show his wound. On the removal of the bandage he had not even a scratch. To-day a Captain in full uniform was picked up with his arm bandaged up, and after the removal of an enormous amount of dirty linens from the arm of a single mark of a wound could be found. Another regular army officer had a slight scratch on his leg as if done perhaps by a briar. Upon his orders he was furnished with an ambulance to convey him to the Aquia Creek landing. While on his way the ambulance was fired into by a party of guerrillas and the officer received a serious wound in his neck.

It has been very amusing to go round town and see old men and young men with canes and umbrellas making maps of Lee's position and Grant's movements in the dust, with which the pavements and streets of this city usually abound. Before the late rain these lines could be found before every doggerel and on every corner from one end of the city to the other.

The secess, as general thing, are very gloomy and despondent. I accidentally heard one of our large fashionable jewelers tell another prominent dry goods man, that he should only wait a day or two, and he would see the tables turned. You can tell a secess now as far as you can see him by the way he stands and reads the bulletin boards.

A rebel Lieutenant happened to be in Fredericksburg on leave of absence at the time our first wounded arrived there, and thinking of doing something smart he rallied the citizens and captured several hundred of our wounded and stragglers and did not discover the "error of his ways" before he was overpowered by his prisoners and hung by the neck to the nearest tree.

Grant's losses are being made up rapidly by reinforcements. Lee's army, say the brave fellows who have been borne hither with evident marks of having combated them resolutely, are getting "groggy," and it is confidently believed by those who have witnessed the last two days fight, that the hour is close at hand, when Lee will fail "to come to time."

The reports of the past week, until yesterday, were very much exaggerated, but now there is no need for imaginary descriptions—the fights of Wednesday and Thursday having made pages of history, which prove the old adage that "truth is stranger than fiction." It is positively certain that Lee can never reach Richmond by railroad, without leaving his army to the tender mercies of Grant, and that determined execution of rebels is in no mood to temper justice with much mercy. The black troops of Burnside's command have seized an early opportunity to retaliate for the slaughter of their brethren at Fort Pillow. In the fight of Tuesday last they cut off and disposed of a requisite number for such retribution, without taking any prisoners.

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