

The Alleghanian.

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I WOULD RATHER BE RIGHT THAN PRESIDENT.—HENRY CLAY.

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POETRY.

"The Quakers Are Out."

[At a Republican meeting in Georgetown, Mass., soon after the late election in this State, the following song, written by John G. Whittier, was read:]

Not vainly we waited and counted the hours,
The buds of our hope have burst out into flowers.

No room for misgivings—no loop-hole of doubt,
We've heard from the Keystone—the Quakers are out!

The plot has exploded—we've found out the trick;

The bribe goes a-begging; the fusion won't stick.

When the Wide-Awake lanterns are shining about,

The rogues stay at home, and the true men come out!

The good State has broken the cords for her spirit;

Her oil-spring and water won't fuse into one:—
The Dutchman has seceded with freedom his heart;

And slow, late, but certain, the Quakers are out!

Give the flags to the winds—set the hills all afame;

Make way for the man with the patriarch's name!

Away with misgivings—away with all doubt,
For Lincoln goes in when the Quakers come out!

A PRACTICAL JOKE.

I had heard it said that "all the world and his wife" were in London in 1851 to see the Crystal Palace; of course I was there, and, after spending most of my mornings in the wonderful structure, systematically examining, catalogue to hand, one thing at a time—I used to drive out every afternoon to the neighborhood of the beautiful and far-famed Richmond Hill, to Bellevue, the residence of a very estimable family, whose guest I was.

It was exceedingly pleasant to see how affectionately disposed the members of the family were to each other. I was therefore with some surprise, and I must own, a little distrust, that I one day saw Mr. Morton, our host, chase his son a mere lad, with what struck me as uncalled for severity, as his only fault had been playing a trick upon one of the servants. As the canes descended, poor Bob's voice ascended, but above all could be heard the belief that some impudent was being practised upon him, and would treat the ghost as he believed the appearance really was in most if not in all cases a person in disguise. Forbes then, with some ingenuity, asked him if he would pass a night in the haunted chamber; George replied that undoubtedly he would, and moreover that he would take a pistol on watch with him, and try the effect of a bullet on the phantom.

Forbes told Stephen Morton of George's resolution, and asked his assistance in a project which he had in view. Morton replied that as far as tradition went, any one might sleep in the haunted chamber with impunity, except on a certain night in November; but Forbes said his scheme was to disguise some person as the skeleton, and for this purpose he thought Stephen was well qualified, as he was tall and thin. Stephen had no objection in the world to play ghost, but said he had several reasons for not wishing to be a target for George, who was a dead shot—one of his objections being based on the decided unwholesomeness of lead when violently introduced into the system. But Forbes quieted his fears by declaring that of course the experiment should not be tried unless he could, unknown to George, extract the bullet from his pistol. It was therefore decided that Morton should be dressed in thin black tights, which their amateur theatrical wardrobe would provide and should have the ribs and all the bones chalked or painted on this black surface, trusting to the dim light afforded by one candle and also to the trepidation which it was premised George would experience to hide the imposture.

Poor Morton was delighted, and was very much in favor of making a terrific speech, beginning with "unhappy mortal," or something to the same effect, and making his appearance in a flash of lightning or at least of leopodium. Forbes however, declaimed strongly against the likelihood of a skeleton speaking, for, as he so forcibly put it, "where would he keep his wind?" and thought it would be much more dignified for the phantom, after he was discovered, merely to move forward slowly, receive the supposed shot from George, and if the latter neither yelled, ran away nor fainted—and one of these contingencies Forbes thought likely—the imposition was to be acknowledged, those on the look-out at the door would enter, and they would all enjoy a hearty laugh at their want of success.

Of course, as it was likely that a pistol would be fired in the house at or about midnight, it was necessary that all the family should know as much about the affair as George did, namely, that he had received and accepted a challenge to pass a night in the haunted chamber, the young men having been let into the whole secret. The manner in which George's resolution

was commented upon was characteristic of the father, who was a disbeliever in ghosts, said "nonsense," in a decided manner; the mother, more doubtful, said, "I hope no harm will come of it"; while Lucy, who was startled at the proposal, seemed anxious; her English common sense, which told her that ghosts could not, or rather do not appear, struggling in her mind with tradition, which vouches for so many appearances of them; and, as upon retiring, she bade George good-night, perhaps she had a presentiment of evil, for her voice faltered, while she added with a forced smile, "I also will keep watch in my room, to hear the first news; take good care of yourself!"

"And now, George having selected one of a pair of pistols which Forbes had handed up for the occasion, loaded it, at the same time dropping a hint or two about his skill with the weapon, and having again declared his intention to fire at any unusual object, we wished them "unpleasant dreams" laughing, and closing the only door of the haunted room after him, he recompensed by looking under the bed and out of the window, which is at some distance from the ground, and then to the dismay of the outsiders, who in their stocking-feet listened to the whistling report of one of their number, who was stationed at the key-hole, he placed his chair against the door and sat down there, effectually barring all entrance, without his knowledge, to anything bodily.

The stocking-robed youth was in consternation. Some of the numbers had already suggested giving it up as a bad job, and the only medical student in the party paused in handling the brush, although the skeleton and by no means his full complement of bones, but after some consideration, a ladder was proposed in connection with the window; the idea was approved of, and two of the party took up and carried the gardener's ladder, which was steadily raised against the window. By this time Morton had his bones anatomically depicted on his exterior, and all that remained was to wait until George dozed.

As George had resolved to keep awake at least till midnight, he had taken a nap; but as the hour approached, he laid the book aside and fastened the pistol—presently he put that down, and began to consider the evidence corroborating the appearance of the spirit. He could not deny that there was strong testimony in favor of the theory; but the thought that a phantom had power to injure him, such a course would be contrary to justice, reassured him. Yet the stillness and a vague feeling of apprehension were depressing, and it was with a feeling of relief that he heard the drawing-room clock strike twelve. "Now, then," thought he, "for something?" but as the "watching hour" passed by and nothing appeared, his only doubt was one of vexation that he should have volunteered to lose his rest, although it was some consolation to know that Lucy had promised to keep awake. This led him to another series of thoughts and to castle-building, until the welcome sight of George nodding was presented to the strained eyes; or rather eye of the watcher, who immediately communicated the intelligence to the plotters, of whom were by this time asleep in the most comfortable positions which the chair, the staircase and the floor admitted of. After several starts and ineffectual attempts to keep awake, George let his head drop upon the table.

The time for action having come, the skeleton climbed the ladder rather cautiously, crept in at the window, and cautiously approaching the table, substituted for the pistol lying upon it the other one of the pair, and which, of course, was minus a bullet. Having concealed the loaded pistol, and taken his position, all that remained was for George to be awoken. As Morton was considering about some ghostly means of doing this, he was saved the trouble by the dog which had followed him to the foot of the ladder, and which, becoming impatient at his silence, began to bark. At the first sound George started, saw the figure, passed his hands before his eyes, and making the object out more distinctly, he seized the pistol and started up, with the challenge: "Who is there?" Although Morton was itching to make a speech, he remained silent, while George, speaking somewhat hurriedly, said: "If you are human, I advise you to throw aside your disguise, for I will certainly fire at you; if not of this world, why, I'll have a shot at you at any rate!" Receiving no answer, he steadily took aim, "I will fire at the word 'three,'" and I never miss my aim. One—two—three!" The pistol went off harmlessly, of course, but with a result upon George entirely unexpected; for being sure of his aim, he could not account for the figure being not only unharmed, but now even approaching him steadily; his

feelings seemed wrought up to a frenzy, and almost as quick as thought he thrust his hand into the breast of his vest, drew out a small pocket pistol, the existence of which no one had dreamed of, and before a word of warning could be spoken, he had fired it full at Morton, who fell dead at his feet!

Meanwhile the outsiders impatiently awaited the *demise*; they had heard George speak and then fire, and while they were hesitating about entering, they heard the second report, and their hearts sank at the sound; they rushed in and found their worst fears realized. As they raised the body, one of them said: "Poor Stephen!" "Merciful God!" exclaimed George, "my friend—her brother?" But I cannot describe the heart-rending scene—perhaps you can picture it to yourself."

As my informant ceased at this point, I asked: "But what became of the other actors?"

"Forbes and Lennox," said he, "gave themselves up at once to the proper authorities; of course nothing could be done to them, although the former frankly declared that, having been the instigator of the plot, he must suffer, or he would go mad; and sure enough, he died in an insane asylum, after being tormented for several months by imaginary skeletons."

The medical student is now the family physician, Lennox, of course, returned no more to the house; his leave of absence soon expiring, he rejoined his regiment, almost reaches of life, which he lost in a tiger-lamb. Poor Lucy pined away and died of a broken heart—if ever there was an instance of the malady.

"Our host thus lost two friends, a brother and a sister. Do you wonder at his antipathy for practical jokes?"

A BOUGH DESCRIPTION OF MINNESOTA.

—An attorney in Minnesota, who had received from another State an account for collection, after acknowledging the receipt of the letter of instructions, replied as follows:

"Now, I am perfectly astonished at you for sending a claim out here for collection in three times. You might as well cast your net into the lake of fire and brimstone, expecting to catch a sunfish, or into the celebrated Stygian pool to catch a peacock trout, as to try to collect money here. Here! I have a faint recollection of having seen it when I was a small boy. I believe it was given to me by my uncle to buy candy with. (The candy I do remember.) But it has been so long since I have seen any that I almost forget whether gold is made of corn or mustard, or silver of white onions or fish scales. Why, sir, we live without money; you're behind the times. It is a rule of barbarism—of ages past. We live by eating, sir—we do. How, man, the millennium is coming, the year of jubilee has come, and all debts are paid here as much as they will be, unless you take 'provisions.' The word 'money' is not in our vocabulary; in the last Webster revised for this American it is marked obsolete; formerly a coin representing money, and used as a medium of commerce. A few small pieces can be seen in our Historical Society's collection, where they are exhibited as curiosities, along with the skeleton of the mastodon, Noah's old boat, and Adam's apple."

This loud reading, when properly done has a great agency in inducing vocal power, on the same principle that all muscles are strengthened by exercise, those of the voice-making organs being no exception to the general rule. Hence, in many cases, absolute silence diminishes the vocal power, just as the protracted non-use of the arm of the Hindoo devotee at length paralyzes it forever. The general plan, in appropriate cases, is to read aloud in a conversational tone, thrice a day for a minute or two, or three, at a time, increasing a minute every other day, until half an hour is thus spent at a time, thrice a day, which is to be continued until the desired object is accomplished. Managed thus there is safety and efficiency as uniform result.

As a means, then, of averting consumption, of being unrevered and entertaining in my company, as a means of showing the quality of the mind, but reading aloud should be considered an accomplishment far more indispensable than that of smattering French, lisping Italian, growling Dutch, or dancing gossips, galloping, polkas, and quadrilles.—Hall's Journal of Health.

ANOTHER RATS.

—A pair of rats happily situated and undisturbed, wild, in three years, have increased to 600,000; calculating that ten rats eat as much in a day as a man, the consumption of these rats would be equal to that of 65,380 men the year round, and leave 600 rats in the year to spare. The rat multiplying at that tremendous rate, it is about as well that this little thieving animal is put to a useful purpose; what more so than having his coat nicely dressed to adorn and set off the delicate hands of the ladies? Our ladies would at the sight of a rat, or even the mention of a mouse, scream with terror, yet they have a daily companion in the skin of a rat gracing and incasing their delicate hands, at the same time exclaiming, "I like the odor," or "such a duck of a glove," etc. How useful are these little animals, then!

ANOTHER ONE.

—At the Democratic powwow at Monmouth, Ill., the other day, a large transparency was paraded, upon which was painted the figure of a white man hanging a fat negro wench, and the words, "The strongest of Republicanism." When it was brought near the speaker's stand, an old lady looking up with interest at the picture, exclaimed in seeming earnest and loud enough for all to hear, "Why, la, me! Douglas has found his mother!" This exclamation stirred up such a hubbub, that the thing was carried off in a hurry.

THE PROSE CONTRIBUTOR OF VENITY.

Fair has gone and fell in love with a six foot beauty—a real Venus of Milo—and finds it hard work to make the poetry come. But he has originated the following:

"I cocked my hat a'wart my head,
I cleaned my cane against the wall;
Tis better to have loved and lost,
Than never to have loved at all."

TRUE RELIGION.

True religion consists not in a nice orthodoxy, but in sincere love of truth; in a hearty approbation of, and compliance with the doctrines fundamentally good; not in vain flourishes of outward performance, but in an inward good complexion of mind; not in a furious zeal for or against trivial circumstances, but in a conscientious practicing of the substantial parts of religion.