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BY JAMES CLARK.]

CORRECT PRINCIPLES—SUPPORTED BY TRUTH.

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POETICAL.

THE PRISONER FOR DEBT.

BY J. G. WHITTIER.

Look on him—through his dungeon grate,
Feebly and cold, the morning light
Comes stealing round him, dim and late,
As if it loathed the sight.

Reclining on his straw bed,
His hand upholds his drooping head—
His bloodless cheek is sunken and hard,
His hair is grey, neglected and hard,
And o'er his bony fingers flow
His long disheveled locks of snow.

No grateful fire before him glows,
And yet the winter's breath is chill;
And o'er his half-cold person goes
The frequent ague thrill!

Silent—save ever and anon,
A sound, half murmur and half groan,
Forces apart the painful grip
Of the old sufferer's bearded lip,
Oh! sad and crushing is the fate
Of old age chained and desolate!

Just God, why lives that old man there?
A murderer shares his prison bed,
Whose eye balls gleam through his horrid hair,
Gleam on him fierce and red.

And the rude oath and heartless jeer
Fall ever on his loathing ear,
And, or in wakefulness or sleep,
Nerve, flesh and fibre thrill and creep,
When'er that ruffian's tossing limb,
Crimson with murder, touches him!

What has the grey haired prisoner done?
Has murder stain'd his hands with gore?
Not so; his crime's a fouler one!
God made the Old Man poor!

For this he shares a felon's cell—
The fittest earthly type of hell!
For this—the boon for which he poured
His young blood on the invader's sword,
And counted light the fearful cost—
His blood-gained liberty is lost!

And thou, for such a place of rest,
Old prisoner, poured thy blood as rain
On Concord's field, and Bunker's crest,
And Saratoga's plain!

Look forth, thou man of many scars,
Through thy dim dungeon's iron bars;
It must be joy, in sooth, to see
Yon monument upreared to thee,
Piled granite and a prison cell—
The land repays thy service well!

Go, ring the bells and fire the guns,
And fling the starry banner out;
Shout "Freedom!" till your lipsing ones
Give back their cradle shouts;

Let hoisted eloquence declaim
Of honor, liberty and fame;
Still let the poet's strain be heard,
With "glory" for each second word,
And every thing with breath agree
To praise "our glorious liberty!"

But when the patriot's cannon jars
The prison's cold and gloomy wall,
And through its gates the stripes and stars
Rise on the wind and fall—

Think ye that the prisoner's aged ear
Rejoices in the general cheer?
Think ye his dim and failing eye
Is kindled at your paucity?
Sorrowing of soul, and charmed of limb,
Waits your carnival to him!

Down with the law that binds him thus!
Unworthy freemen, let it find
No refuge from the withering curse
Of God and human kind!

Open the prisoner's living tomb,
An usher from its brooding gloom
The victim of your savage code,
To the free sun and air of God!
Nor longer dare as crime to brand,
The chastening of the Almighty's hand.

A countryman lately went into school in one of the large cities, where it was advertised to teach short hand.—He had a son he said, who was not exactly short handed; but he was short of three fingers, and he'd gin' almost anything if he could learn to write.

The following plan of courtship was recently adopted by a couple:—"Miss Adelia, will you marry me?"—"Well, Thomas, I s'pose I must."—"I'll be much obliged to you if you will."—"Then he kissed her, and she kissed him, and the business was settled right off."

"William," said a pretty girl to her lover, the other day, in the Bowery, "I'm afraid you don't love me any longer."—"Don't love you any longer," replied Bill!—"I don't do nothin' shorter."

MISCELLANEOUS.

A FOREST FUNERAL.

I have been several times on the point of writing you about Sunday in the forest, but have each time forgotten my intention, or had too much else to say.—There have been many scenes of worship in which I have taken part, or which I have witnessed. I have seen the ignorant worshipper of senseless images, and the formal worshippers of the pretended real body of The Crucified, present in the bread of the Host. Nay, I have heard the solemn cathedral chant, when thousands knelt and prayed, and have heard the *Miserere* in the Solemn Passion night thrilled through the souls of countless waiting worshippers. But I never felt so near to God and near to Heaven as on the banks of the river on a calm Sunday morning, when the thousand voices of the forest were united in a hymn. There is a melody in running water that is never imitated or equalled by any art; and there is a strange harmony between the sounds of the running water, and rushing wind, and singing birds, and the voices of the various wood animals, that all together make up the morning song of the forest when it wakes to praise the Infinite.

How slowly and silently the dead leaves drop one by one into the water from the listless branches. The branches themselves bend and sway up and down, and back and forth, as if with life; for it does not seem that any wind is blowing, but the trees lean over as if to see their own shades a thousand times repeated in the rippling river, and reach their arms down towards the glittering surface, as if loving and longing to lie in the clear bed.

Some of them have fallen. Yonder is one that has lain for four years, yes, six years, to my knowledge, in that same position—and every year at the same time, I come and sit here and watch that long branch swaying backward and forward in the swift current. Once while Willis and I sat here, he saw a mink's head rise above the water in the eddy below the trunk, and his rifle ball, true to his unerring aim, cracked the small skull at this distance, and it is not less than a hundred and twenty yards. But that was not on Sunday, and I am now speaking of the forest Sabbath.

We had one long and weary and somewhat unsuccessful expedition last fall. We made our calculation to go through the whole hunting district in the course of six days, and reach the river ten miles below our cabin on Saturday, so that we might attend church there,—or rather hear preaching in a log-schoolhouse, from a clergyman who once a month visited the small settlement. We worked hard during the week, and we were not sorry at dusk on Saturday to sit down in the comfortable frame house of Col. —, who is the owner of some thousands of acres in that immediate vicinity. The schoolhouse in which services were to be, is beautifully situated in a grove of oaks on a point around which the river bends and runs rapidly with a lulling sound. Did you ever notice how different the voice of a river in passing different scenes? Up in the gorge above, it is wild, and rages as if angry with the rocks it meets, and its voice is like the voice of a roused warrior. But here it goes slowly and sedately by the little "oak-school-house," as it is called, and would seem to linger as if loving the quiet.

It was nearly midnight, of Saturday night, that a messenger came to Colonel —, requesting him to go to the cabin of a settler some three miles down the river, to see his daughter, a girl of fourteen, who was supposed to be dying.—Col. — awoke me and asked me to accompany him, and I consented, taking with me the small package of medicines which I always carried in the forest.—But I learned soon that there was no need of these, for her disease was past cure.

Leaving the house, we descended to the bank of the river, and stepped into

a canoe that lay in an eddy, and seizing a pole flattened at one end for a paddle, Col. — pushed the slight vessel out into the current, and we shot swiftly down. I have described so many night scenes that I forbear giving you this.—You imagine the scene if you choose, as I lay in the bottom, and he used now his pole and now his paddle, to guide the bark in the rapids.

"She is a strange child," said the Colonel, "her father is as strange a man. They live together alone on the bank of the river. They came here three years ago, and no one knows whence or why. He has money, and is a keen shot. The child has been wasting away for a year past. I have seen her often, and she seems gifted with a marvellous intellect. She speaks sometimes as if inspired; and she seems to be the only hope of her father."

We reached the hut of the settler in less than half an hour, and entered it reverently.

The scene was one that cannot be easily forgotten. There were books and evidences of luxury and taste, lying on the rough table in the centre. A guitar lay on a bench near the small window, and the bed furniture, on which the dying girl lay as soft as the covering of a dying queen. I was, of course, startled; I never heard of these people before; but knowing it to be no uncommon thing for misanthropes to go in the woods to live and die, I was content to ask no explanations, more especially as the death hour was evidently near.

She was a fair child, with masses of long black hair lying over her pillow.—Her eye was dark and piercing, and as it met mine, she started slightly, but smiled and looked up. I spoke a few words to her father, and turning to her, asked her if she knew her condition. "I know that my Redeemer liveth," said she in a voice as sweet as the sweetest strain of an Eolian. You may imagine that the answer startled me, and with a few words of like import I turned from her. A half hour passed, and she spoke in that same deep, richly melodious voice: "Father, I am cold; lie down beside me"—and the old man lay down by his dying child, and she twined her emaciated arms around his neck, and murmured in a dreamy voice, "Dear father, dear father."

"My child," said the old man, "doth the flood seem deep to thee?"

"Nay, father, for my soul is strong."

"Seest thou the thither shore?"

"I see it father; and its banks are green with immortal verdure."

"Hearest thou the voices of its inhabitants?"

"I hear them, father; as the voices of angels, falling from afar in the still and solemn night-time; and they call me.—Her voice, too, father—Oh, I heard it then!"

"Doth she speak to thee?"

"She speaks in tones most heavenly."

"Doth she smile?"

"An angel smile! But a cold, calm smile. But I am cold—cold—cold!—Father, there's a mist in the room.—You'll be lonely, lonely, lonely. Is this death, father?"

"It is death, my Mary."

"Thank God."

I stepped out into the night, and stood long and silently looking at the rushing river. The wife of a settler arrived soon after, and then the Colonel's excellent lady and her daughter, and we left the cabin.

The Sabbath morning broke over the Eastern hills before we reached the school-house again. But never came Sabbath so solemnly before. The morning service in the school-house I have not room to describe now, for I have taken more time and space than I had any idea of.

As evening approached, a slow and sad procession came through the forest to the little school house. There, with simple rites the good clergyman performed his duty, and we went to the grave. It was in the enclosure where two of Col. —'s children lie, a lovely spot. The sun was setting as we enter-

ed the grove. The procession was short. They were hardy men and rough, in shooting jackets, and some with rifles on their shoulders. But their warm hearts gave beauty to their unshaven faces, as they stood in reverent silence by the grave. The river murmured and the birds sang, and so we buried her.

I saw the sun go down from the same spot, and the stars were bright before I left it—for I have always had an idea that a graveyard was the nearest place to Heaven on this earth; and with old Sir Thomas Browne, I love to see a church in a graveyard, for even as we pass through the place of graves to the temple of God on earth, so we must pass through the grave to the temple of God on high.

RANK IN THE ARMY; OR, A BARBER'S DIGNITY.

After a portion of the troops had landed on the beach near Vera Cruz, on the night of the 9th of March, a body of the enemy commenced a brisk fire of small arms into the encampment. Of course, all hands were on the *qui vive*, expecting the Mexicans would make some demonstration upon our lines during the night, and when the firing commenced, concluded there was about to be a general attack. The lines were soon formed, and not a word could be heard from the soldiery, but there was a negro who kept running from one little point of hill to another, apparently in a state of great excitement. He finally laid himself flat on his face, at full-length, and commenced working himself into the soft sand with a good deal of energy. On being asked what he was about, he replied: "I is 'fraid some ob dem 'ere copper balls will put a stop to me drawin' my rashuns." "Why, in the devil," asked the party speaking to him, "don't you get up and fight them?" "No, sir-ee!" he said, "dat's my massa's part ob do bizness; he been down to West-pint; where dey make fightin' people to learn dat, and you don't ketch dis nigger meddlin' he-self wid udder peoples' bizness. My massa does de fightin' an' I waits on him, an' nusses him. If he gets wounded we gets promoted." You get promoted! What good will his promotion do you?" inquired the individual. "Oh, Lor' hab mercy! dat question is been settled long time ago in dese parts down here; a colored gemman what waits on a kurnel always outranks one dat waits on a capten, an' de way we colored gemmen reg'lers makes dese volunteers niggers squat is a caution to white folks."

The Barber-Banker.

A Washington correspondent of the *N. Y. Globe*, tells the following anecdote of a new banker, who has been issuing notes lately. A cunning hair dresser in town, a native of *La Belle*, France, took advantage of the example set by self-styled "bankers" and put forth notes from six-and-a-quarter up to twenty-five cents. One day as he was engaged in his lawful occupation of shaving a customer, a lad came somewhat abruptly into his shop, and thrust forth a scrap of paper, resembling a bank note. "Aha! well, boy, vat you want, eh?" said the banker. "This 'ere's one of your bills, and I want a quarter in silver for it—'cause nobody will take it of me!" "You want a quarter in silver, eh?—perhaps you no read de papier, eh?—read him!"

Boy reads—"When presented in five dollars and over, paid in Virginia money."

"Aha! you no 'ave five dollar, eh?—Go, boy, and get five dollar, and I redem de money."

Exit boy in disgust.

Taking his customer by the nose and gliding his razor as smoothly as he could for the inward chuckling going on, the barber-banker, in a half soliloquy, muttered—

"Be gar! it is a great thing to understand de finance! I pay when five dollar come to me; but be gar! I no issue but four dollar and seventy-five cents!"

SPRING.

BY GEORGE D. PRENTICE.

The resurrection of Nature from the Death of Winter, into the life and joyousness of Spring, is one of the most interesting and beautiful processes presented in the visible creation. After the months of stupor, the hues of death pass from the fair face of nature, and it once more regains the freshness and beauty of its immortal youth. The forests awake from their long trance and are again re-clothed with verdure. The bleak buds, saluted by the warm greetings of the beam and the breeze, gradually expand into the maturity of full grown leaves. The snow-wreaths dissolve on the hill-side and vanish from the valley, and soon the rapidly upspringing grass restores to them their former glory. The frown of the winter-god passes from the landscape, and it again resumes all its splendor to the admiring eye. The streams burst the fetters of their icy bondage, and once more mirror in their glassy bosoms the stars and clouds of heaven, the flitting forms of birds and insects, the majesty of overlooking hills, and the gracefulness of over-hanging trees. These are a few of the manifold changes produced by the breath of spring, which no well-constituted mind can contemplate without feelings of blended admiration, delight and praise. The contest between the sternest and liveliest of the seasons has been sustained thro' the several doubtful weeks; and savage winter, with his glazed eye and frosty beard and blasting breath, has, at length, been vanquished, and now sits on his throne of icebergs far off in the gloomy north. The ever welcome and joyous goddess of spring is swaying her gentle sceptre over hill and plain, and while the flush of triumph adorns her victorious brow and is reflected back from myriads of flowers, it becomes 'us, who are proud to number ourselves among her most devout and loyal subjects; to do her homage by kneeling at her feet and kissing the hem of her many-colored garment.

We have retreated beyond the prison walls of the city and are now where the hum of business cannot mingle with our thoughts. Everything around is smiling in the awakened glory of the spring-side. A rapid brook brawls at our feet, and in its clear waters we see many tiny fish whose silvery sides flash as they are kissed by the sunbeams. This little stream is the coquette of the woodland. It goes singing along its sinuous course, now gracefully turning aside to receive the devotions of the blue-bell, that modestly droops its bower of bloom as if anxious to hear what each whispering wavelet may be pleased to say, while farther on it sweeps disdainfully away from that garnish wild-flower, which seems vain of its beauty, and would, like Narcissus, worship the reflection of itself in the stream. Overhead bends the blue and sunny sky, with here and there a feathery cloud floating on its bosom. On the right of where we sit, we discover many noble oaks, "Those green robed Senators of mighty woods," flinging their stalwart arms far and wide, and immediately in front, between the trunks of trees, we catch glimpses of the beautiful green hill-side which lies beyond the beechen grove. The day is warm and tranquil, the winds are asleep, the little birds are warbling forth sweet gushes of song, while far off in the blue air we see the black forms of several vultures wheeling and sailing around in spiral circles, soaring higher and higher towards the crystal battlements until they will soon look like mere specks in their lazy elevation.

The various fruit trees are in their glory and wealth of beauty. It is delightful to lean against their trunks and listen to the hum and watch the busy motions of the honey-gathering bees.—They are dainty insects and will not condescend to enter every flower that woos them to its embrace, but after glancing curiously into a dozen, they suddenly choose to go into one without any reason that is obvious to us for their preference, and having secured as much

sweet treasure as they need, off they dart in a straight line for their home.

The birds are busy with their courtships and love-makings. In every direction, we hear the low, soft, and flute-like notes of the blue-birds, and the livelier songs of the robins. The martins have come back, and are looking at their old summer quarters, or hunting up new places in which to rear their broods.—The woodpecker is tapping away on the topmost dead limb of the sweet gum, while, far below him, the partridge stands on the mossy and blackened fence rail, whistling to his mate that he cannot see; but who, from the grass of the meadow, responds to his call of love. The larks are merry in the fields, and their few but inexpressible rich and sweet notes are among the most delicious sounds that fall on the ear of the lover of nature.

SWEARING IN HEBREW.—Not long ago, as I was on my way from Newark to Jersey city, in the cars, I observed a young lady sitting opposite to me, who seemed very much annoyed by the conversation of a young naval officer, which was continually intermingled with oaths. She at length, (having sat as long as she could without reproving him,) said, "Sir, can you converse in the Hebrew tongue?" He replied that "he could" expecting, no doubt, to hold some conversation with her in that dialect. She then politely informed him that if he wished to swear any more, he would greatly oblige herself, and probably the rest of the passengers, if he would do it in that language. The young man was silent during the remainder of the passage.—*Gleaner.*

From the Lancaster Tribune.

To Farmers and Potato Growers.

For some years past, the people of this country have sustained many serious losses in consequence of the Rot, and general failure of the potato crops. We have felt this calamity in our own county, very much during the past twelve months.

Now my friends, such having been the case, I will here suggest a mode which will prevent the Rot, and produce the usual crop. I speak from experience in this matter. Let every farmer plant his potatoes above ground in the following way:—When your ground is well covered with manure, every 2 1/2 or 3 feet throw two light furrows together, within 2 or 3 inches, then lay your seed on the top 10 or 12 inches apart, and cover it lightly. Afterwards give them the ordinary ploughing and dressing.—The seed remains near the surface, the ground become more mellow, the potato grows much larger, and in a wet season the unnecessary water will run off and prevent the Rot.

This experiment was tried by a gentleman in a lot, one half of which was put in the ordinary way, by ploughing down, and the other half put in as above. In the fall, when taken up, not one could be found diseased, and more than double the quantity in bulk, as they had grown much larger than those planted on the other part of the lot.

Lancaster. G. B. M.

The Many Headed Wheat.

Of which we have recently had so many marvellous accounts in the papers, is indigenous to California. It is said that six heads of this wheat, procured by Major Spreng, from a native of the Osage tribe of Indians, produced six hundred grains, which were planted by Mr. Alpheus Baker, of Ibberville, S. C., the production of which was ten thousand heads. The ground on which the wheat grew was measured by an accurate surveyor—the heads counted—and one head shelled out, and the grain weighed; a calculation was then made, the result of which was, that the wheat produced at the rate of two hundred and thirty bushels to the acre. It was planted about the last of January, and cut on the 20th of June. The land on which it grew was poor and sandy, and was unassisted by manure. This is a tall story, it is true; but we have no special reasons that we are aware of, for calling in question its credibility. Superior culture is always accorded to new seeds, hence the wonderful productiveness of many kinds, particularly those that are exorbitantly "cracked up."