



BY JAS. CLARK.

HUNTINGDON, PA., TUESDAY, AUGUST 28, 1849.

VOL. XIV, NO. 33

THE CANVASS BAG—WHAT WAS IN IT.

BY GEORGE F. BURNHAM.

A young cabinet maker was on his way home from his daily labor one evening, a few years ago, in a Southern city, and as he was about to turn the last corner before reaching his humble dwelling, the hand of a stranger was placed upon his shoulder, and a low voice almost whispered in his ear—
"Which way, Matthew?"
The mechanic turned quickly, and a voice sounded queerly, and startled him. It was getting quite dark, the streets were lonely and still, and it was a singular salutation; the face of the man who accosted him he had never seen, and though he noticed, a few paces behind, another person, who seemingly awaited the first one, he replied that he was on his way home for the night.
"Matthew, you are a cabinet maker?"
"Yes," was the answer.
"And are not overstocked at present with employment?"
"No, no," said Matthew hesitatingly. "I have a job for you if you like it."
"When?"
"To-night."
"How?" asked Matthew surprised.
"This very night."
"Where?"
"That is of no consequence. Accompany me to the end of the street, where a carriage awaits us, enter it, submit to be taken where it is my will, perform the service I require, and ere daylight shall dawn, you return home one hundred dollars richer than you are now."
"But the service, what is it?"
"Ask me no questions. Will you have the money?"
Matthew reflected—he was very poor—he consented.
"Go on—I will follow you."
"Enough!" replied the stranger, and Matthew Faran instantly fell behind the man, who led the way in the direction opposite that which pointed towards his own domicile.
Arriving at the end of the street, the second stranger joined them, and the trio entered the carriage which stood in waiting. Matthew suffered himself to be blindfolded, and the vehicle rolled away rapidly, the cabinet maker knew not where. The pavement was left behind, the vehicle emerged upon a smooth road, and at the end of nearly an hour, it halted, ascended a steep hill apparently, and then stopped altogether.
The steps were let down, the inmates alighted, and one of the party accosted the driver with—"promptly at 4 o'clock," and Matthew heard the vehicle turn from the door again. They entered, passed through a long hall, up a flight of stairs, across a narrow passage, and down half a dozen steps; then, after winding through several apartments, apparently, they descended once more, and finally entered a room where they came to a stand.
The door was closed, locked and barred on the inside, and the bandage was then removed from Matthew's face. He was not a little nettled to find himself in total darkness, while his arms were being held evidently, by men on both sides of him. The silence was instantly broken, however, by the voice which he recognized as that of the man who accosted him originally in the street.
"Now, Matthew Faran," said the speaker, "you have agreed to perform the service I claim at your hands, and for which you will receive the sum of one hundred dollars. Before you begin your work you must swear to be faithful and to preserve the matter a secret." Matthew promised, for he found that the tempting offer of one hundred dollars for a single night's work, had drawn him into a position from which he would gladly escape. But it was too late to retreat. Matthew promised secrecy, and a moment afterwards a light was struck, and the mechanic beheld on either side of him an entire stranger, as far as form and appearance went, in spite of their seeming familiarity with his name and profession. Each man held a glittering pistol in his hand, and in the corner of the farthest extremity of the apartment, the cabinet maker saw a pile of rubbish, lumber, tools, bricks, &c., and also what seemed a large canvass bag, filled with he knew not what.
"You see, Matthew," continued his guide, "we are prepared for emergencies. Now proceed to business. Here are materials and tools in profusion. In the bag yonder is enclosed a human body,"

yonder, deposit the body in it, and then you must bear it to the river close by."
"I can't—I!"
"You must!" continued the other, cocking his pistol, and placing the muzzle of it close to Matthew's cheek, "or you must join him, and we'll box you both up together! what is your answer—quick!"
"I obey," muttered poor Faran submissively.
"Here is your hundred dollars. In two hours we shall return, when all must be in readiness," and the masked wretches left their victim alone to perform his word. The door was locked behind them, and Matthew at once surveyed the premises.
In vain did he search for egress. He reflected—he was plainly in the hands of desperate men, and in self defence he at last commenced his frightful job, which he bethought him were best done quickly, since it must be done at all.—He drew forth a board, glanced at the long narrow bag, shuddered a moment and then commenced. Scarcely had he placed the saw upon the edge of the lumber, when he thought he heard his name mentioned. The mechanic faltered, the perspiration coursed down his cheeks, he listened—he halted—for he plainly heard a whisper, a low, stifled, cautious whisper—"Matthew! hist!—Matthew Faran!" and the saw fell from the mechanic's hand, as he gazed wildly about him, utterly at a loss to comprehend this matter.
"Matthew, come here—here," continued that fearful whisper again, and Faran approached the corner where lay the canvass bag, though the sweat rolled from his forehead and his knees tottered, and his breath had well nigh deserted him.
"In God's name! what—where—who speaks!"
"Me, Matthew, me, here in the bag—hist!"
Matthew approached a little nearer, and finally his wits, which had momentarily deserted him, returned, and he saw it must be. The villains, whoever they were, had attempted a murder, he thought, and had not succeeded.
"Rip open the bag, Matthew, my hands are tied—rip it open, and I'll help you to make the box!—quick, Matthew, there's no time to lose—quick, and Faran instantly applied the chisel to the seams and had the satisfaction of beholding a "live man" jump from the bag, who instantly explained matters.
"They have mistaken me for an enemy. They are river pirates, I think, and believe that they suffocated me to-night, three hours ago. They have employed you to throw me into the river."
"Where did it happen?"
"Here, in this very room. See—the charcoal furnace! They stunned me, sewed me in this bag, threw me upon my face, lighted the charcoal—there, don't you smell it?"
Matthew had been temporarily deprived of his senses, generally, and he didn't smell any thing at all!
"They believed me dead, Matthew: for when they returned they attempted to lift me; but there's a crack in the old floor, you see, through which I breathed, and my limbs were stiffened for the occasion, as they tried to raise me up.—Now they wish to cover up their tracks—don't you see?"
"Yes. Well, what next?"
"Get to work, keep saving and humming, make the box, put plenty of air holes in it—you shall nail it up (not over carefully, you know), and you can then throw it into the river, as they desire. It will all come right. Where do you live, Matthew?"
"Me! where—live?" muttered Faran, not knowing exactly whether he was talking to a phantom or not, after all.
"Yes, where do you reside?"
"Oh, yes—in C—street."
"The number?"
"Twenty-seven."
"On the right?"
"No, left—yes, on the right, I mean."
"What time do you breakfast?"
"At seven," said Matthew slowly.
"Go on, then, hurry Matthew; finish the box, throw it into the river, and I'll breakfast with you at 7 o'clock in the morning."
Matthew did hurry, the box was finished; the "dead" man got into it, Matthew nailed on the top carefully, and ten minutes afterwards his employers entered, armed to the teeth, and beheld the empty bag on the floor.
"Is it done?" asked the foremost.
"The terrible job is completed," said Matthew with a deep drawn sigh.
"Good! Now Matthew, up with it," and Faran shouldered the box, which he did not find very heavy, and the two scoundrels led the way to the river. A splash was heard, the night (or rather early morning) was exceedingly dark, and the two employers and their supposed victim entered the carriage near

by, at the same moment that the dead man, (having forced off the top of his box) was climbing up the river's bank very comfortably, except so far as an involuntary cold bath was concerned.
Matthew was left at the same corner he was taken from an hour before daylight, and proceeding directly home, his alarmed family were quickly comforted with the brief explanation he vouchsafed on his arrival.
At seven o'clock, a carriage halted before the door, and there stepped out from it a gentlemanly looking, well-dressed man, who was soon inside the mechanic's humble dwelling. It was the whilom occupant of the canvass bag!
He did breakfast with him, and when he left him an hour afterwards, he placed in his hands a roll of bank notes.
"You saved my life, Matthew Faran," he said, "I have my own reasons for not discovering myself to you. We shall never meet again, probably, for I shall leave these parts at once. They gave you one hundred dollars to bury me, here are five hundred more for the excellent manner in which you performed the service. You are a cabinet maker I think, Matthew?"
"Yes sir, at your service."
"And well have you served me, Matthew. I shall commend you to my friends. Good morning," said the stranger, whom Matthew never saw from that moment.
Who the scoundrels were that employed him at such a liberal price to do the business, he never ascertained. He made six hundred dollars by the job, got frightened out of a year's growth, but never afterwards agreed to do a job of which he did not know the accurate details before-hand; for to the day of his death, did he remember the canvass bag and what was in it.

Young Men.

There is no moral object so beautiful to me as a conscientious young man. I watch him as I do a star in heaven, clouds may be before him, but we know that his light is behind him, and will beam again; the blaze of others popularity may outshine him, but we know that, though unseen, he illuminates his own true sphere. He resists temptation not without a struggle, for that is not virtue but he does resist and conquers; he bears the sarcasm of the profligate, and it stings him, for that is a trait of virtue, but he heals with his own pure touch. He heeds not the watchword of fashions, if it leads to sin; the Atheist, who says not only in his heart, but with his lips, "there is no God"—controls him not; he sees the hand of a creating God, and rejoices in it.
Woman is sheltered by found arms and loving counsel; old age is protected by its experience; and manhood by its strength; but the young man stands amid the temptation of the world like a self-balanced tower. Happy he who seeks and gains the prop and shelter of morality.
Onward then conscientious youth—raise thy standard, and nerve thyself for goodness. If God has given thee intellectual power, awake in that cause; never let it be said of thee, he helped to swell the tide of sin by pouring influence into its channels. If thou art feeble in mental strength, throw not that drop into a polluted current. Awake, arise young man! assume that beautiful garb of virtue! It is difficult to be pure and holy. Put on thy strength then. Let truth be the lady of thy love—defend her.—Miss Caroline Gilman.

A Tragedy.

An affair is related in the Steubenville (Ohio) Herald which is said to have occurred on the 13th of June last—which was then adverted to, but for want of more authentic information, a public exposé has been delayed until the present time. It seems a Mrs. Rebecca Aitcham left home on the 5th of June, and after loitering about the neighborhood for a few days, took her children, aged 6, 4 and 1, to the banks of Big Yellow Creek, and in the deepest place in stream consigned herself and the three children to a watery grave. The head of the eldest showed some signs of violence; whether done in being thrown into the stream; or previously is not known. The causes which led this woman to the commission of so horrible an act are said to be inattention, abuse, cruelty, and jealousy on the part of the husband.

QUEER CALCULATIONS.

The editor of the Yankee Blade says: "It would be a curious sight to see all the babies in the United States under five years of age together; they would be a pretty collection of 2,400,000. What a squalling there would be should they all get spanked at the same time, and what a great heap of sugar plums it would take to quiet them!"

Reformation of Wm. Wirt.

The distinguished William Wirt, within six or eight months after his first marriage, became addicted to intemperance, the effect of which operated strongly on the mind and health of his wife, and in a few months more she was numbered with the dead. Her death led him to leave the country where he resided, and he moved to Richmond, where he soon rose to distinction. But his habits hung about him, and occasionally he was found with jolly and frolicsome spirits in bacchanalian revelry. His true friends expostulated with him, to convince him of the injury he was doing himself. But he still persisted. His practice began to fall off, and many looked on him as on the sure road to ruin. He was advised to get married with a view of correcting his habits. This he consented to do, if the right persons offered. He accordingly paid his addresses to Miss Gamble. After some months' attention, he asked her hand in marriage; she replied—"Mr. Wirt, I have been well aware of your intentions for some time back, and should have given you to understand that your visits and attentions were not acceptable, had I not reciprocated the affection which you evinced for me. But I cannot yield my assent until you make me a pledge never to taste, touch or handle any intoxicating drinks." This reply to Mr. Wirt was as unexpected as it was novel. His reply was, that he regarded the proposition as a bar to all further consideration of the subject and left her. Her course toward him was the same as ever—his, resentment and neglect. In the course of a few weeks he went again, and again solicited her hand. But her reply was, her mind was made up. He became indignant, and regarded the terms she proposed as insulting to his honor and vowed it should be the last meeting they should ever have. He took to drinking worse, and seemed to run headlong to ruin. One day, while lying in the outskirts of the city, near a little grocery or grogshop, dead-drunk a young lady, whom it is not necessary to name, was passing that way to her home not far off, and beheld him with his face returned to the rays of the scorching sun. She took her handkerchief, with her own name marked upon it and placed it over his face. After he had remained in that way some hours, he was awakened, and his thirst being so great, he went into the little grocery or grog-shop to get a drink, when he discovered the handkerchief, at which he looked, and the name that was on it. After pausing a few minutes, he exclaimed—"Great God! who left this with me! Who placed this on my face!" No one knew. He dropped the glass, exclaiming "Enough! Enough!" He retired instantly from the store, forgetting his thirst, but not the debauch, the handkerchief, or the lady, vowing, if God gave him strength never to touch, taste, or handle intoxicating drinks.
To meet Miss G. was the hardest effort of his life. If he met her in her carriage, or on foot, he would dodge round the nearest corner. She at last addressed him a note under her own hand inviting him to her house, which he finally gathered courage to accept. He held her if she still bore affection for him he would agree to her own terms. Her reply was: "My conditions are now what they ever have been." "Then," said the disenthralled Wirt, "I accept them."
They were soon married, and from that day he kept his word, and his affairs brightened, while honors and glories gathered thick upon his brow.—His name has been enrolled high in the temple of fame, while his deeds, his patriotism and renown live after him with imperishable lustre. How many noble minds might the young ladies save, if they would follow the example of the heroine-hearted Miss G., the friend of humanity, of her country, and the relation of La Fayette.

Lecture on the Elephant.

Ladies and gentlemen! Allow me, this evening, to introduce an animal called the Elephant. He is the greatest of all tread mill animals that helps to keep the globe in motion. Among the Anglo-Saxons, he is known only by the name of elephant; but with all barbarous and half civilized nations he is unanimously dubbed the bull-phunt.—He is about the size of a two year old omnibus, and in color approaches as near to a black as he possibly can without absolute infringement. To look at him not too severely, one naturally supposes him to be a small mountain of India rubber or huge composition of glue and molasses.
The elephant is one of the natives of the East Indies, but he has been met with in various parts of Mexico, and is frequently seen in the great city of New York. It has been asserted upon both righteous and profane authority, that he is indigenous to the diggings of California—however, the assertion, as yet, goes a begging for confirmation. It is my private opinion, though, that the animal exhibits himself to travellers in all parts of the world, only they entertain a monstrous reluctance to confessing the fact.
He carries his trunk with him wherever he goes, but never keeps anything in it, not even a change of shirts. When cousin Ichabod first saw him at a show, he exclaimed with mute astonishment: "Then that's the rale Managerer—the identical critter hisself! I s'now, wouldn't two of 'em make a team to draw stun with! Golly, aint he a scrounger!" Ichabod went home and related what he had seen. "I seen," said he, "the genuine Managerer, the darndest biggest lump of flesh that ever stirred. He had two tails, two; one behind and the other before. He put one of his tails in my coat pocket, and hauled out the gingerbread—every hooter. What d'ye think he done with it! Why he stuck it in his own pocket, and began to fumble for more—darn him!"

A POLITE SHERIFF.

Making his neck comfortable. Sheriff Sumner was remarkable for his great attention to matters of etiquette. Nothing could make him forget his natural politeness, and at times this quality was extended when it had a most ludicrous effect. Towards criminals he was exceedingly polite, and on one occasion when an unfortunate prisoner was to be executed, the sheriff with that kindness of heart which was one of his prominent characteristics, paid every attention to the culprit which his dreadful situation required, and when the poor fellow was led upon the scaffold and the rope had been adjusted Mr. Sumner inquired in the most friendly manner:
"Does the knot suit you, sir?"
"Yes, I don't know but it does," said the prisoner.
"If I could make it more comfortable to you I should be extremely happy," said the sheriff. "Will you do me the great favor when you are ready, to drop your handkerchief?"
"I haven't got any handkerchief," said the prisoner.
"Oh! excuse me. Will you oblige me by making use of mine for the occasion?"
The handkerchief was accepted and the black cap was drawn over the doomed man's head. After a short time the handkerchief was dropped. Mr. Sumner said, and as the body dropped down, he raised his hat from his head and said with a most profound bow, and bland smile, "Good morning sir."

MODEL BAR APPEAL.

"Judge, your time I know is precious, as must be the cause with so able and valued a member of society. This case is perfectly clear and I know your learning and lucid intelligence. For me to argue would be not only a waste of time, but an insult to your penetration. Much might be said, but nothing is needed. Before any other judge I would lay down the rules of law, but here I know they have been deeply studied, and wisely understood. I look around me and behold an humble house of logs, yet see before me the spirit of truth, the unpurchased distributor of law; and the old tenement rises before my mental vision, proud and beautiful as a majestic temple to Justice. Judge I have a bottle of old prime Monongahela in my pocket; for the respect I bear your character allow me to make you a present of it."
"Verdict for the defendant," said the judge.

WOMEN AND TOBACCO.

A sensible cotemporary says:—"The women ought to make a pledge, not to kiss a man who uses tobacco, and it would soon break up the practice; and a friend of ours says they ought also to pledge themselves to kiss every man that don't use it—and we go for that, too."

John Van Buren on Father Ritchie.

In a speech delivered at Cleveland, Ohio, on the 13th ult., John Van Buren hits off that old political sinner Ritchie as follows:
"But, Mr. President, we want a National party. We have none. We have no National Editors. I speak of the Democratic party. Ritchie is not an organ of the Democratic party. True, he might become so. I can very well imagine that he might become rabidly anti-slavery. Nothing in the past history of that man goes to preclude the possibility of such an event. He denounced Gen. Jackson in terms of the most abandoned bitterness. 'The election of Andrew Jackson,' said he, 'to the Presidency of these United States, would be a greater calamity than war, pestilence, or famine.' And yet afterwards he turned in, and helped to elect him twice to the Presidency! He denounced the Independent Treasury bill as a measure fraught with danger to the liberties of the people; as an infernal invention of the President and his Secretary; by which one kind of currency was to be provided for government, and another for the people; and now he floods the air with appeals to stand by it, as a basis upon which the whistled Democracy may be rallied! whilst his ink turns pail at the frightful vigor with which he deals out encomiums upon it as the perfect production of human wisdom! I am reminded of a remark of the lamented and revered Silas Wright. He said that Ritchie experienced no difficulty at all in changing his position; but that very facility extinguished every particle of his influence." He may come right; but he will present a spectacle which will challenge the contempt of every one who shall have a fair claim to be ranked as a human being. Look at him, sitting at the seat of government. A Convention of slave holders is assembled to hold lamentations over the advance of the free spirit of the land, and consummate their plans for the dissolution of the Union. A slave-holder occupies the chair of state, knitting his brows to indignantly frown down the efforts of freemen for freedom; and the Union is threatened by Southern fire on every hand. Does he speak? Does he sound an alarm, and give notice of danger? No. But there he sits, lamenting over the removal of a Collector of Customs, or pregnant with holy horror, when the head of a decapitated Inspector rolls from the block! Yes, there he sits, like a superannuated market woman, by the road side, crying over her broken eggs! In my opinion, the only tune which he can play upon his cracked organ; to which the Democracy can universally respond, is this:
"Oh! carry me back to Old Virginny!"

The Pope Reinstated.

A telegraphic despatch from General Oudinot to the French Minister of War, dated the 16th ult., conveys the intelligence that the re-establishment of the authority of the Pope had been proclaimed the previous day, and the General adds, "In the midst of the most enthusiastic acclamation of the assembled multitude. A Te Deum was chanted, and prayers of thanksgiving were offered up at St. Peter's. Public tranquillity is every day being confirmed—the best feeling exists between the troops and the population." The clat of the thing must be taken with liberal grains of allowance, as it would be rather strange for the populace to veer round so suddenly.

A GOOD IRISH ANECDOTE.

Some years since, when the beautiful painting of Adam and Eve was exhibited in Ireland, it became the chief topic of conversation. Finally a poor, ragged, illiterate peasant went to see it. The light was so arranged as to reflect on the picture, and leave the spectator in comparative darkness. The peasant as he entered the room to see his first parents, was struck with so much astonishment that he remained speechless for some moments. He stood like a statue, and as though his feet were incorporated with the caken floor of the room. At last, with an effort, he turned to an acquaintance and said, "Barney, I'll never say another word agin Adam in all my life, for if I had been in the garden, I would have ate every apple in it, for the sake of such a lovely creature as Eve."—It is needless to add that this was received with roars of laughter.

POPULARITY DEFINED.

"Was Mr. Brown a popular man when he lived in your town?" inquired a busy body of his friend.
"I should think he was," replied the gentleman, as many persons endeavored to prevent his leaving, and several of them, including the Sheriff, the Deputy and several constables, followed him for some distance."