



BY JAS. CLARK.

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## The Fiddler and the Wolves.

A WESTERN SKETCH.

The pine woods of Mississippi abound in wolves, and many strange adventures are told by travellers who have penetrated the waste and desolate region of Leaf River. Col. Claiborne, in a recent letter from that neighborhood, relates the following:

A year or two since, a wedding being about to come off there, it was necessary to send some twelve miles for an old negro fiddler, who was indispensable at every frolic, quilting, or house raising, forty miles round. In the meantime the company gathered, the squire performed the ceremony, the groom had taken half a dozen "horns" with his particular friends, and the jests at his expense had all been perpetrated and laughed at. The bride and the young ladies sat ranged round the room like so many statues pinned to the wall. The bashful gallants stood outside, about the doors and windows, anxious to be in, but reluctant to approach, and urging each other to "break the ice."

The Squire and a knot of old uns were talking politics, and, as the evening was warm, guzzling every ten minutes from a huge hump-shouldered, short-necked, four sided bottle, several of which might be seen on a stump before the door; while a score of matrons in white caps and aprons, by the blaze of light wood torches, were bustling about the supper table in an adjoining house.

At length the girls began to yawn.—The pretty bride herself grew drowsy. A scraping of feet was heard in the gallery, and one or two impatient young bucks commenced shuffling, cracking their heels together, and cutting the "pigeon wing." Still no fiddler came. Hour after hour rolled by, supper was deferred, the drinks came faster and stronger, the yawning more frequent among the ladies, the talking louder among the gentlemen around the stump, and yet Old John, as the fiddler was called, was not forthcoming. Never had he been a delinquent before.

As the night wore on, and the seven stars were high in the heavens the impatience of the company became unbounded, and it was suggested that he should be sent for. A wedding without the fiddle was not considered lawful, and the Squire swore there should be no "greasy doings" or "chicken fixens" till Old John came. The idea flashed across them that, perhaps, he had been beset by wolves. No sooner was this thought of, than half a dozen young fellows mounted and galloped down the path that led to the forest.

About four miles distant stood a waste house, and as they approached it, an infernal howling was heard, and now and then amidst the din, the squeaking of a fiddle. The place had long been reputed to be haunted. One moment the boys listened in surprise. The howl of a single wolf had no terrors for them; but the diabolical serenade from a dozen, and the twang of the cat-gut in that dark old house! David Crockett himself couldn't have stood it, so they turned tail and "cut dirt" for the place they came from, and reported that the devil had nabbed Old John, and was then at the haunted house, dancing a break-down with a gang of she-wolves for his partners. So wonderful a story, supported by sundry emphatic oaths, threw every thing into confusion. The young ladies didn't quite go into duck-fits, but they exchanged mysterious looks, and gathered round a withered old woman, whose voice sank into a whisper as she related strange tales of that deserted dwelling.

The Squire, the oracle of the settlement, discredited the story. He took a big drink, and insinuated that the boys had tipped the bottle once too often before they set out, and roundly swore that he would face all the wolves on Leaf River, and all the devils in hell, if the company would back him!

A hornal round was taken on the strength of this speech, and in a few minutes the men were all en route for the scene of action. They rode on in great glee for a mile or two, but gradually lapsed into silence, and at length the wolf chorus came floating on the breeze, and then the sharp notes of a fiddle were distinctly heard. The horsemen dismounted, and crept on cautiously, concealed by the bushes, towards the haunted cabin. At that moment the moon burst forth, and within the building might be seen the old fiddler, poised in air, playing a Virginia reel, while a crowd of wolves, or demons, were leaping, bounding and howling to the music. A council was called. The company, satisfied that it really was the devil, voted an immediate retreat, but the Squire jerked out his prayer book, and swore he would run his nose through the chinks if every man sprung from him. He started forward with book in hand

while two others, half afraid and half ashamed, dropped into line. The nearer he got the louder and more devoutly he spoke. The howling became terrific, the fiddling grew sharper, until suddenly the din and yell rose to such a tremendous key, that human nature couldn't stand it. The line paused, then broke in every direction, and the Squire shouting "devil take the hindmost," mounted his singecat, and was the first to carry the word to the ladies. There was no sleeping that night. The rose-leaf on the bride's cheek paled away; the jessamine drooped on her raven locks, though nourished by the sigh that came ever and anon from her gentle bosom. The groom sat by, clasping her velvet hand, and gazing with long fond looks into her lustrous eyes.

At length day came, and a more haggard, disappointed set never was seen. It was determined once more to repair to the fatal spot. There was a clear sky and spanking breeze. They rode boldly forward. There stood the house. The tumult was as loud as ever. A dozen wolves leaped up and down, panting for breath, their eyes red and fiery, their tails switching furiously, and there on the joist was perched, not the devil—but old John himself. He had set out rather late on the preceding evening for the wedding. Night overtook him among the hills, and he soon heard the ravenous creatures on his track. Nearer and nearer they came; faster and faster he fled, but still they gained upon him.—He dropped his hat, that detained them an instant. He threw down his coat, they stopped to scent it, but the next moment on they came in full view. Almost desperate, he tore off his shirt, but they merely paused to toss it in the air. Their prey was just before them, and on they rushed. The fugitive dashed into the cabin, bounded convulsively to the joist, and at the instant that he swung himself from the floor, the whole troop plunged madly in, gnashing their teeth, and frantic for blood. Finding himself secure, and recovering his composure, he slid along the beam, and closed the door, thus imprisoning the whole gang. He then braced himself up, unsling his fiddle, and began to play, in hopes of being heard and to keep himself awake. John, like most of his drowsy race, was too apt to sleep, and to avoid it rattled off his jigs till daylight. The effect of the music on the wolves was singular. They leaped up incessantly, foaming at the mouth, snapping at each other, howling hideously, and to all appearance, raving mad. John was soon relieved; the monsters were shot and scalped; the company repaired back to the ladies, converted the supper into a breakfast, had a roaring carouse, and the ruins of the "haunted house" are still to be seen on the waters of Leaf river.

## The Faithful Dog.

A STORY OF A DARING BURGLARY.

BY UNCLE TOBY.

The Messrs. Hubert kept a very extensive jewelry establishment in one of our large cities, and for the better security of their store against fire and other casualties, they employed one of their clerks to sleep in it at night. The idea of the store's being attacked by robbers was not for a moment entertained, but it was for other objects, such as security against fire, and the like, that young Loring, the clerk, slept there, for he was not supplied with any weapons to repel an attack of thieves. But one dark, dreary night he was awakened by a singular noise which resembled that which a party of burglars might produce in an attempt to enter the building, and looking toward the back windows, he soon satisfied himself that one or more persons were endeavoring as quietly as possible, to effect an entrance at that quarter. They had already removed part of the sash and shutters with their cunningly devised instruments, and must have been at work sometime before he was awakened.

Now young Loring regretted that he had no weapon, but thro' no fear, that was not a characteristic of the young gentleman, but that he might pepper the rogues a little. At first he determined to cry out and arouse the watch, but as they had advanced so far before he was awake he thought he would drive them off by stratagem! He slipped on his clothes quietly, and approaching the spot where the thieves were busy, he saw the hand of one of them passed inside of the shutter into the store, in its owner's endeavor to guide a small hand-saw with which he was cutting a small aperture for his body to pass through. Young Loring attempted to chop off the hand with a small hatchet that lay hard by, but he refrained, and bethought himself of a powerful preparation of a caustic vitriol and other penetrating

stuffs that were used in the testing of the purity of silver and other metals. One drop of this would eat instantly into the flesh and produce a poisonous sore in ten minute's time. He cautiously dropped a little upon the burglar's hand, and awaited the result.

"Bill," at length exclaimed the burglar to his comrade, "I've got a cursed burning on the back of my hand. It's so sore I can hardly work this saw. Phew! how it smarts! I guess I've cut it with the saw. Hold the dark lantern here."

"Fudge!" replied his companion; "change hands then, but don't stop."

"Take the saw yourself then! I can't stand this pain!"

And while the discomfited burglar withdrew to groan over the supposed cut, the other took his place with the saw, and in a moment after received a few drops of the fiery liquid upon the back of his hand, and was soon groaning with agony.

"Curse this saw! it has cut me too!" groaned the second thief.

And after sundry oaths mutually exchanged, until the first and worse attack of pain was over, they renewed the attempt to make an entrance.

The clerk permitted them to go on a while uninterrupted, knowing that at any moment he could stop their efforts by crying out, but he hoped to hear some watchman passing the front of the store upon whom he could call to secure the rogues, and he resolved to wait for this until it would do to wait no longer. But soon the burglars had so much enlarged the hole they would shortly be able to enter by it themselves.

Seeing that he must do something to stop them, the clerk crept in the dark, close at one side of the window, and uttered a low but fierce growl in imitation of a dog. Both of the rogues stepped back at this unexpected interruption.

"Hang it! Bill there's a cursed dog in there. I didn't know that the Hubert's kept one," said one to the other.

"A dog? that's bad. Curse 'em, if it was a man, why a shot or a dr'k stroke would fix him; but a dog's quite another thing, for if we shot him he'd be sure to half kill one of us!"

"Bow, wow, wow," cried the clerk, with all his power as he saw them prepare to resume their work.

"Confound the dog!" exclaimed both.

"Never mind; go ahead, Bill, and get it open now. I'll fix him when we get in."

The burglar addressed as Bill, thrust his hand in once more to wrench off the last piece of wood that obstructed their entrance, when the clerk, having already armed himself with a large pair of pincers, seized the robber's hand as though in a vice, and sat up such an outrageous barking that the whole neighborhood was alarmed.

"For heaven's sake, Jack, lend us a hand here; this cursed animal is biting my hand half off!" said the burglar to his confederate.

"Pull it away—pull it away quick."

"I can't."

"Give it a jerk!" said the other.

"O-o-o! I can't murder, murder!"

This cry, added to the howlings of the supposed dog, soon brought the watch in good earnest and the thief, who was at liberty to do so, ran for his life.

The watchmen's lights showed Bill Sikes that he had been bitten by a pair of pincers.

This is a fact, and occurred in New York city during the winter of 1841; and Bill Sikes served out his imprisonment at Blackwell's Island.—*Flag of our Union.*

DOCTORS IN THE WAY.—A correspondent tells us of a distinguished physician and temperance man, who has been employing brandy pretty extensively in his practice, and our informant thinks that if this is the way this doctor treats reformed men, he will kill more of them with drunkenness than he will save from cholera. We say so too.

A reformed man over in Hudson county, N. J., after abstaining some years, was told by the doctor that he must put a little brandy in his water. So he obtained a bottle of "real good brandy," and took a little—next day took a little—next day a little more, when it suddenly struck him that the old hankering was getting pretty strong and clamorous. "Here," said he, addressing the bottle, "Look here, you are an old acquaintance, you are the same that once mastered me, and made me a slave and a sot, a fool and a pauper. Now you don't come it over me again. I'm decent now, I'm respected now, I've got a nice little property and a happy family, and you don't get them away from me again. You've got to go, doctor or no doctor, cholera or no cholera; there, be off," and away went the bottle out of the window, and was dashed to pieces. We say to all in like circumstances, go and do likewise.—*N. Y. Organ.*

## Who Knows?

"Who knows?" Such is the translation of a sign over a dram shop, not one hundred miles from the Queen City. Ah! who knows what will be the fate of a young man who has reeled out of that place for the first time, drunk? Who knows how much misery and wretchedness he will bring on himself, his family and friends? and when his life shall be brought to an ignominious close, who knows what will be the character of that scene when he shall be called to yield up his spirit into the hands of him who gave it—who knows?

Last Sabbath morning was as lovely a morning as ever dawned—a morning rich in joy and beauty. All nature seemed vocal in the Creator's praise. Happy groups of smiling children were hastening, hand in hand, to Sabbath School; whilst persons in maturer years were wending their way to the several places of worship, in cheerful obedience to the summons of the church-going bell. And there seemed nothing to disturb the calm and holy serenity of the mind. But such is the change sin has wrought in the world, that its traces may be seen and the effects witnessed in the loveliest spots the earth contains; and so universal its dominion, that in the circumference of a few yards may be seen the noblest instances of virtue, and the commission of the most notorious crimes—the opposite extremes of wealth and poverty, joy and sorrow, life and death.—In the building before me lies the drunkard breathing his last—his miserable career about to terminate, and his immortal spirit about to try the realities of another and untried being; and in the one adjoining are Christians, singing the praises of God.

Who can contemplate the contrast without praying that that time may soon come when all shall know the Lord?

As I entered the place, I beheld the almost lifeless body of this habitual drunkard, seeming past all hopes of human skill. It was evident that ere many minutes had flown, his soul would be ushered into the presence of his final Judge. His reason had left him, which rendered any attempt to call him to a sense of his awful situation useless. For a long time past he had been continually in a state of intoxication, and it seemed that God, who in his forbearance had spared his worthless life, through the prevailing scourge, could forbear no longer, and had cut him down that he might not cumber the ground. Oh! how that haggard eye, starting from its inflamed socket—that furrowed cheek; and prematurely wrinkled countenance—speak of long years of dissipation and crime. Hell already seemed in his soul, and looked from his wild and glaring eyes. When his last breath had fled, who could gaze on that silent corpse and not follow in imagination the track of the departed spirit to the judgment bar of Him, who has said that drunkards shall not enter the kingdom of heaven, and who has said that as the tree falls so shall it lie.

Had this man been a "Son of Temperance" how different would have been his life, how different his death! Had he made his peace with his Maker, ministering angels would have hovered over his dying couch, and perhaps a loving wife and affectionate children would have smoothed his dying moments with their sympathy and attentions; and the society in which he had lived would have followed him to his grave and paid a tribute of respect to his memory.—Sons of Temperance! what a stimulus to you to go on in your heaven-born work your crusade against intemperance, the crying evil in all our cities, and the fearful source of much of the crime and misery which we see around us. Rest not your oars, but go manfully on, and you shall meet a sure reward. Heaven smiles on your efforts, and will crown them with success. Persevere! for remember that every soul you rescue from the destroyer, drink, is a citizen recovered—is a husband and father reformed; and many a wife and many a child shall bless your institution, and fervently wish you God speed!

In conclusion, who knows what will be the closing scene in the lives of those who still use intoxicating liquors, though perhaps it may be at present moderate? Who knows but that the habit of taking it moderately may increase and increase until the bounds are passed, and you are hurried irresistibly forward till you are unable to return—and then what will be your end? Who knows?

—*Cincinnati Com.*

THE tone of good company is marked by the absence of personalities.—Among well informed persons there are plenty of topics to discuss, without giving pain to any one present—without submitting to, act the part of a butt, or of that still poorer creature, the wag that plays upon him.

## Prayer.

Teachers have too much subordinated the feeling, to the reasoning Being, in their theory of the relation of God to man: in a word, they have overlooked the heart in man—the heart, which is the organ of love, as intelligence is the organ of thought. The imaginings of man in respect of God may be puerile and mistaken, but his instincts which are his unwritten law, must be sometimes right; if not, Nature would have lied in creating him. Now, whatever may have been the intentions of God in giving those two instincts, mystery and prayer, whether He meant thereby to show that He was the incomprehensible God, and that his name was Mystery; or, that he desired that all creatures should give him honor and praise, and that prayer should be the universal incense of nature—it is most certain that man, when he thinks on God, feels within him two instincts—mystery and adoration. Reason's province, is to enlighten and disperse mystery, more and more every day, but never to dispel it entirely. Prayer is the natural desire of the heart to pour forth unceasingly its supplications, efficacious or not, heard or unheard, as a precious perfume on the feet of God. What matters it if the perfume fall to the ground, or whether it anoint the feet of God? It is always attribute of weakness, humility and adoration.

But who can say that it is ever lost? Who can say that prayer, the mysterious communication with invisible Omnipotence, is not in reality the greatest of all the natural or supernatural powers of man? Who can say that the supreme and immortal Will, has not ordained, from all eternity, that prayer should be continually inspired and heard, and that man should thus, by his invocations, participate in the ordering of his own destiny? Who knows whether God, in his love, and perpetual blessing on the beings which emanate from him, has not established this bond with them, as the invisible chain which links the thoughts of all worlds to his? Who knows but that, in his majestic solitude, which he peoples alone, he has willed that this living murmur, this continual communing with Nature, should ascend and descend continually in all space from him to all the beings that he vivifies and loves, and from these beings to him? At all events, prayer is the highest privilege of man, since it allows him to speak to God. If God were deaf to our prayers, we should still pray, for if in his majesty he would not hear us, still prayer would dignify man.—*Lamartine.*

## A Sea Fight.

Capt. Rochfort, of the British and Irish Company's screw vessel *Rose*, arrived yesterday morning from London, and reported having on his passage fallen in with a whale of huge dimensions, on Sunday morning, at 2 o'clock, seven miles S. W. of the Lizard. This monster was suffering severely at the time in an encounter with two well known enemies of his tribe—a sword-fish and a thresher. These formidable creatures generally go together through the waters, and are reputed to be joined in a league of unrelenting enmity against the cetaceous animals. Capt. Rochfort and his crew saw the combat for about three quarters of an hour; but being obliged to continue their voyage homewards, they had to forego the pleasure of witnessing the struggle to its close; and of taking in tow to Dublin the body of the vanquished whale, for of his being eventually worsted in the affray there was no doubt. The sword-fish was seen once driving its tremendous weapon into the belly of his victim, as he turned on his side in agony. The thresher fastened on his back, and gave him some terrific blows which were heard at a distance with great distinctness. The latter not having any power to strike in the water, it was the instinctive policy of the sword-fish to make the attack below; this causing the whale to rise above the surface, which he did at times to a remarkable height; the other assailant, which was about twenty feet long, then dealt out his blows unsparingly, with all the force of his lengthy frame—between them their victim must have suffered extremely; he spouted blood to an immense height, and crimsoned the sea all around to a considerable distance. Being within two hundred yards of the ship, towards which the whale seemed to make for protection, the conflict was distinctly visible to all on board. It is considered unusual for marine animals, such as were engaged in the struggle now narrated, to be seen in such latitude. But this point must be settled by naturalists.—*Dublin Packet.*

A LIBERAL MAN.—One who wants to rent your stable and offers the eggs laid on the hay-mow by other people's chickens, as rent.

## The Best Joke of the Season.

The New York correspondent of the Philadelphia Inquirer, relates an amusing incident which happened near that city recently:

One of the crack military companies of New York went on an excursion to a neighboring village, and after partaking of an excellent dinner, the members of the company separated, each going his own way for a short distance. One of them, eyeing a beautiful arbor close by, entered it, and rested himself on an inviting bench, which, unfortunately for his white pantaloons, had received a fresh coat of green paint about an hour previously. This he did not observe, so he planted himself on it, & puffed his fragrant cigar, with great comfort.

Suddenly the reveille was beaten, up our hero jumped, his rear having a very verdant appearance. On account of the shortness of the coat tails of the company, the calamity which had occurred to him was immediately observed, but in a wrong light entirely. It was whispered that he was attacked with cholera, and away the company scampered for medical assistance. In ten minutes, no less than five medical men were in attendance, each stocked with camphor, opium, capsicum, and a variety of other drugs, and each of whom insisted upon the patient swallowing his prescription immediately.

It was in vain the poor fellow protested; down the drugs should go, and it was some time before he could convince his fellow soldiers and the doctors that he was as well as any of them. After the truth was elicited, the company indulged a hearty laugh, and the victim who by this time was choleric enough, remained over night, to get his unmentionables washed.

## Anecdote.

Among the good people down east, the pious Puritanic custom is not yet obsolete of naming children after the cardinal virtues of Patience and Experience, Faith, Hope, and Charity, Righteousness and Justice, Truth, Love and Mercy. Not long since a clergyman in Connecticut was reading to his congregation the beautiful and poetical psalm of David, wherein he says: "Mercy and Truth are met together; Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other." At this passage, a little girl in the assembly manifested great interest, and whispered to her mother, "That's just as true as you live. I seen Righteousness Hill-a-kissing Peace Peabody behind the smoke house—But how did the minister know it."

This reminds us of an anecdote we have heard of a gentleman of yore who was paying his addresses to the daughter of a worthy old farmer, who rejoiced in the Christian name of Charity. An elder sister enjoyed the sweet and quiet name of Patience. On one occasion, shortly after the gallant beau arrived at the house of his "lady love," a groom from the stable announced that Massa D.'s horse was very bad with the cholera. He was a noble steed, the pride of his owner, and adjudged the best piece of horse flesh in the country. At once all was alarm, the beau forgot his dulcinea, and turned to bestow all his attention to the long switch-tail-roan. He became very much alarmed, and exhibited so much restlessness and anxiety in his endeavors and resorts to relieve the animal, that the old gentleman called upon him to "Have Patience, Mr.—, have Patience." This was so often repeated, that the young Lothario thought it, perhaps, an attempt to foist the eldest daughter upon him, and exclaimed, "No, if I can't get Charity, I'll be— if I have either!"

¶ We often hear people complain of very light grievances. Generally speaking, they are the most fortunate of mankind, and because of their very exemption of trouble, trials and vicissitudes of a serious character, they fret and become peevish at trifling ills. To all such we recommend the following description of an afflicted son of Adam, named Mosher, who is a resident of the town of Sandford, N. Y. "He has been confined to his bed for twenty-six or seven years; for the first eleven years of his disability he helped to maintain himself by making shoes while confined to his bed—the first attack having dislocated the joints in his lower limbs rendering them powerless. His arms next became dislocated, and his jaws were set a few years since, making it necessary to break off four of his front teeth that nourishment might be given him. The only joints that he can move at all now are one or two of his toes.—For thirteen years he has not helped himself in the least."

Life is brief; let all, therefore, endeavor to sweeten, not to poison the cup.