EASTON GAZETTE.

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ADVERTISEMENTS

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From the Knickerbocker, for April.

STRAY LEAVES.

From the Portfolio of a Georgia Lawyer

THE WATER MARTYR.

Washington Irving has described with great force and humor the delights of 'a rainy day in a country inn;' but if he had had my experience in the matter, he could have made a more judicious selection of 'the time of day,' and given with his graphic pen the history of a rainy night in a country inn. I suppose it makes but little difference to the community at large which of the two great men accomplishes an undertaking; and therefore, with the characteristic modesty of my profession, I will proceed to fill up the picture which 'the greatest living master of the English language' has commenced.

The duties of my calling caused me to attend the Superior Court of one of the interior counties. It was a cold, wintry day, cloudy and windy; in short, such a day as makes life disagreeable and gloomy. A man might have walked a score of miles, and as the lawyers say, 'take nothing by the motion;' his blood would still have remained stagnan and chilled. The business of the court commenced.—The judge (who was an amiable man, with occasionally an awkward way of showing it) pushed forward the business with an elacrity that convinced me that he was trying to get through the docket in one day. The court-house was an old wooden building, and the cold wind blew fitfully in upon us; the shutters creaked upon their hinges, or slammed against the panes; and although it was a most disagreable, miserable day; and we each and all felt like a bear who in climbing had fallen down and knocked off a part of his head. My cases were called in order, and I proceeded with divers success. When night came on I had 'contracted' a violent cold, and having lost two cases consecutively, when the remaining suit was called, I pleaded indisposition, told the judge that I had 'struck a streak of bad luck,' and begged him to give me until morning to recover my health, my fortune and my equanimity.

My competitor, who was a very courteous young man, interposed also in my behalf, and his honor at length assented. I left the court-house, with my temper on the north side of amiable. My throat was lacerated and sore; my breathing was oppressed; the night was pitch dark and drizzly; I was excessively short sighted, and before I had proceeded forty yards from the court house, I fell over two goats that had composed themselves to slumber in the open air, in total disregard of their own comfort, & of the safety of any unhappy wayfarer who might cross their path. One of them, acting doubtless upon the axiom that self-defence was the first law of nature, before I had time to rise or to expostulate, 'then and there,' as the lawyers say, with head, horns and feet, inflicted upon me divers butts, blows, kicks and bruises, to the great injury of 'your petitioner,' & contrary to the peace and harmony of the good people of ——. The noise and outcry that I made while suffering these accumulated injuries, brought out a large yard dog, who gave each of the goats a severe shake, which rejoiced my heart, though he brought my self congratulations to an end by biting a piece out of my leg; a circumstance which for ought I know, may have elevated his character for impartiality with his quadruped antagonist, but which certainly entitled him neither to my respect nor esteem. A few yards brought me to my lodgings in the country inn. I had in the morning secured a bed in a shed-room, and thither I bent my way, 'considerably riled,' as they say down east. I passed through a large room in which there were six beds, five of them occupied, each by two persons, and one sixth vacant. The shed-room opened upon this apartment, and I went in, and looking hastily around me, proceeded to take of my coat.

I had hardly done this, when my antagonistical friend and conqueror came in also. He was in a very delightful humor, as lawyers always are when they gain their cases, and tried to put me in the same, by insisting that as I was sick and tired, I should take 'the best bed,' for which I returned him my thanks, although my bad temper suggested to me, that possibly I might be as much indebted to a very large crack in the roof, (a very dangerous sympton in a shed-room of a rainy night,) immediately over the 'best bed,' as to his courtesy and regard for my comfort. Just as we had settled this point, the landlady or mistress of the house, made her appearance at the door.

'What do you want, madam?' said I, with a short and petulent air.

'I am the lady of the house, sir,' replied she.

'I wish then that you would exercize some control over your goats and dogs, for they have nearly assassinated me.'

'Oh, Squire, (they call all lawyers Squire,) don't be so cross; I ain't the universal guardian for all the goats and dogs in the country. Besides, I came here to caution you. You don't mean to sleep in that bed?' pointing to the 'best bed.'

'Yes, madam, I do, if I ever get a chance to undress,' said I, throwing at the same time my vest upon the floor, and kicking off my boots.

'But you *mus'nt* sleep there!' she joined.

'I will,' replied I, 'in spite of all the goats, dogs, and old woman in the country!'

'Why, Squire, listen to reason. I am speaking to you for your own good. Do you hear the rain dropping upon the roof?'

'I dare say I should hear it, madam, if you would stop talking.'

'Well, then, you'll *feel* it directly, for it pours in there like a seive, whenever it rains hard.'

Alas! that was the death-warrent to my comfort! As long as I had in prospect a good night's rest, I could bear up against the accumulated evils of my lot; but these tidings put an end to all my hopes

'Why did'nt you tell me this before?'

'Because you would not let me: but come, put on your boots and clothes, and I will show you a bed where you will be dry, unless it rain *mighty* hard.'

My heart smote me with my ill-temper and I complied, and followed her. The 'dry bed,' as she called it, was the vacant bed in the large room through which I had passed. It was flanked on one side by a door, which opened upon a cold entry, and no physical effort, I am satisfied no mental one, could bring it within a foot of closing, leaving a hiatus, through which the keen wind whistled. On the other side was an open window, without glass or shutter; and as the rain pattered upon the sill it sprinkled the bed clothes. Any man who could have slept there for one hour without encountering a severe pleurisy, must have had ribs of iron and lungs of platina. The good old lady saw a smile on my countenance—despair occasionally manifests itself in that way—and mistaking its meaning said, in a soothing tone:

'There now, my child, there's a comfortable dry bed for you; you are a clever young man, and I'm glad to see you've got over your ugly temper.'

I don't know whether it was her flattering allusion to my youthful appearance, (as we grow old we get a little sensitive on such matters,) or to her giving me credit for a quality which I did not possess; but her remark completely recalled me to my sense of gentlemanly propriety, and I answered.

'My dear Madam, I am sorry that I have exhibited so much bad humor, but the truth is, those wretched animals have butted and bitten all my good sense out of me; pray excuse me, and don't trouble yourself any more. This bed is too cold for me, but I don't think it will rain much longer, and I dare say I shall be very comfortable in the shed room.—Good night!' I retreated to my apartment and went to bed. The rain pattered so sweetly on the shingles, and with such a lulling sound, that despite of all my effort to keep awake, I fell asleep. A terrible dream (compounded of divers scenes and materials, such as lying down under a guillotine, with executioners with the heads of dogs and goats standing over me, and the drops of blood falling upon me from the axe) awoke me. The rain had changed its 'locus ad quem,' and had substituted me for the roof. All at once it changed its pattering sound and came pouring in through the cracks like a mimic cataract of Niagara.

'The enemy is upon us, Frank!' shouted I, at the top of my voice, & springing and seizing our clothes at random, we rushed into the large room.

Alas! what a prospect met our view! The water was running in a stream across the floor, the cots actually quivering with the pressure of the water upon them; and, 'all unconscious of the tide of ill,' the occupants slept on. I made for the dry bed, which had one unfortunate man in it, and standing upon it, put on my wet clothes, and buttoning up my great coat, crossed the entry, and presented myself in the room usually used as the eating apartment. Here a most grotesque scene presented itself, and one altogether different from that just left by me. There was no water here; a bright fire burned on the hearth: about ten men were seated around it, telling anecdotes and drinking whiskey. Around & about the room some fifty persons were stretched in slumber: some on tables, others on the floor, a few nodding in chairs, and two women in the back ground, smoking immense pipes. I knocked my cap over my eyes to prevent them from recognising me (as I knew they would torment me with endless legal questions,) & sat down quietly on a small stool in the chimney corner.

Opposite to me was seated a little man, who went by the euphonious appellation of 'Dick,' and who kept his hands before his face, with his head bent down. The conversation around the fire was kept up very briskly; consisting principally of descriptions of the travels of the various relaters. Whenever any new place was described, and its beauty or fertility commended, Dick would chime in with the observation, 'Fust rate!' 'Why, how do *you* know, Dick?' some one would ask. 'Been there,' was invariable his pithy answer. At last some one mentioned England, and said he had 'hearn tell that it was a 'tip-top country.'

'Fust rate!' said Dick.

No one noticed this remark; but thrown off my guard for a moment, and forgetting my incognito, I asked:

'Why, Dick, what do you know about it?'

'Halloo! here's the Squire!' roared the crowd in chorus. 'Squire, we're very glad to see you; we've got some little pints we want you to make us sensible on.' Then followed a legion of questions such as, 'Squire, if a man marries, and has no children, what's the law?'—'Squire, if a man dies, & leaves an aunt, what's the law?' 'Squire, if a man's wife runs away ——.'

Here one of the smoking women interposed, and giving the speaker a tremendous box on the ear, with the significant expression, 'shut up!' nipped his query in the bud. This produced a general laugh, in which all joined but the boxer and the boxee, who were man and wife. When this subsided, Dick became interrogative. 'Lawyer,' said he, 'I got a little interrogation to put 'long with the rest. Suppose I buy a tract of land, with the 'purtenances, who does the live squirrel on the top of the trees belong to?'

Here followed a roar of laughter.

'He's got you, Squire.' 'Hurra for Dick!' 'Buy Dicky for a fool etc.

As soon as I had a chance to speak, feeling that my reputation was concerned, I determined to carry the war into Africa. 'Dick' said I, 'Look up at me and answer *me* one question, and then I'll answer your's. Suppose I were to buy this house and the 'purtenances, including the drunken men in it whom do you think you'd belong to?'

This turned the tide in my favor, & amidst the merriment it excited I arose and left the room. As I got into the entry the day was just breaking; the cocks were making a noise more like a scream than a crow; a horse was lying down under a shed, and a man was asleep, with his head upon the horse, as a pillow. I tripped and fell over him with a tremendous crash, received, but reckoned not of, a wound' & entered the sleeping room. Things there were in *statu quo* except that two of the sleepers had roused themselves and were getting up. Without saying 'gentlemen, by your leave,' I turned in, with great coat, spectacles, cap, and boots, and wrapping a blanket around me, tried to get to sleep. In a few minutes two men came in a voyage of discovery, & attracted by my spectacles and cap, stooped down and ascertained who I was:

'Well, if the Squire aint drunk?'—'Well, did I ever!'

I was so sick and weary that reputation was nothing to me: so I did not contradict them, hoping they would go out very soon, and leave me to my slumbers. Some bystander, however, interposed, and said:

Let him alone; he has been up all night, and is sick.'

Unfortunately for my credit and that of my kind friend, at this moment he stumbled and fell into the water.

'Why, you are *all* drunk!' exclaimed the newcomers; and out they went to promulgate the intelligence.

When the court assembled again, I came in with red eyes and throbbing head, and reported myself too sick to proceed, upon which the court was adjourned for the term. As I passed out, I heard divers commentaries on my condition: 'I never knew it gentlemen! 'Pon my honor, I thought he was a waterman.' 'Drunk sick!' Shame upon these drunken vagabonds!' said one of Eve's fair daughters. But little I heeded all these remarks. I would have looked with complacency upon any man who was my hangman, and the gallows would have been a comfortable prospect to me. I ordered my carriage, reached home the next day, was bled and blistered for a fortnight, and came near 'shuffling off this mortal coil.' The next time I visited the county of ——, was in the spring tide: The balmy air, the sweet song of the birds, and the green foliage, presented a very different appearance from the 'fall term.' I was in high spirits; but, alas for human happiness! After I had argued my first case, and considered that I had come off with flying colors, I was dismayed by hearing around me: 'First rate book man;' 'smart chap; what a pity he drinks!'

From that hour my fate has been sealed in that county. Belonging to a temperance society, and strictly observing its rules; nearly losing my life by an excess of rain water; I am nevertheless regarded there as a confirmed drunkard, whose talents are wasted and misapplied and whose steps are tending to ruin and the grave. I am emphatically a martyr to water; and I give public notice to all Washingtonians——

But there is no use in threatening. I may as well submit to my fate, and fall, like Cæsar, with dignity, 'even at the foot of Pompey's statue. There are some events in life which a man is not apt to forget. I rather think that the rainy night in the country inn, which made me a water martyr, will be remembered by me 'as long (to use the graceful language of a brother lawyer) as a single tree remains in the broad field of reason, or a solitary flower blossoms in the garden of memory.'

Correspondence of the Nat. Intelligencer.

MISERY IN CITIES—FIVE POINTS.

New York, March 13, 1843.

As I presume you are interested in the one portion of New York made classic by a foreign pen, let me jot you down a *mem.* or two from my first visit to Dickens's Hole, at the Five Points, made one evening last week with a distinguished party, under charge of the Boz officer.

I had an idea that this celebrated spot was on the eastern limit of the city, at the end of one of the omnibus routes, and was surprised to find that it was not more than three minutes' walk from Broadway, and in full view from one of the most fashionable quarters. It lies, indeed, in a lap between Broadway and the Bowery, in what was once a secluded valley of the island of Manhattan, though to believe it ever to have been green or clean, requires a powerful effort of imagination. We turned into Anthony street at half past ten, passed 'the Tombs,' and then took the downward road, as did Orpheus and Dickens before us. It was a cold night, but women stood at every door with bare heads and shoulders, most of them with something to say, and, by their attitudes, showing a complete insensibility to cold. In every thing they said, they contrived to bring in the word 'shilling.' There were few men to be seen, and those whom we met skulked past as if avoiding observation; possibly ashamed to be there, possibly shrinking from any further acquaintance with officer Stevens, though neither of these feelings seemed to be shared by the females of the community. A little turn to the left brought us up against what looked to be a blind, tumble down board fence; but the officer pulled a latch and opened a door, and a flight of steps was disclosed. He went down first, and threw open a door at the bottom, letting up a blaze of light, and followed into the grand subterranean Almack's of the Five Points. And it really looked very clean and cheerful. It was crowded with women, chiefly negroes, and well lit, and the black proprietor and his 'ministering *spirits*' (literally fulfilling their vocation behind a tidy bar) were well dressed & well mannered people, and received Mr. Stephens and his friends with the politeness of grand chamberlains. We were a little early for the fashionable hour, the ladies not having arrived from the Theatres; and, proposing to look in again after making the round of the other resorts, we crept up again to the street.

Our next dive was into a cellar crowded with negroes, eating, drinking, and dancing, one very well made mulatto girl playing the castanets, and imitating Ellsler in what she called the *cracover again*. In their way these people seemed cheerful, dirty, and comfortable. We looked in afterwards at several drinking places, thronged with creatures who looked over their shoulders very significantly at the officer; found one or two bar rooms kept by women who had preserved the one virtue of neatness, (though in every clean place the hostess seemed a terrible virago,) and it was then proposed that we should see some of the dormitories of the Alsatia. This is called 'murdering alley, said or guide. We entered between two high brick walls, with barely room to pass, and by the police lantern made our way up a broken and filthy staircase to the first floor of a large building. Under its roof the officer thought there usually slept a thousand of these wretched outcasts. He knocked at the door on the left. It was opened unwillingly by a woman who held a dirty horse blanket over her breast, but at the sight of the police lantern she stepped back and let us pass in. The floor was covered with human beings asleep in their rags, and when called by the officer to look into a low closet beyond, we could hardly put our feet to the ground, they lay so close together, black and white, men, women and children.

The doorless apartment beyond, of the size of a kennel, was occupied by a woman and her daughter, and the daughter's child, lying together on the floor, and covered by rags of no distinguishable color, the rubbish and bones and dirt only displaced by their emaciated limbs. The sight was too sickening to endure, but there was no egress without following close to the lantern. Another door was opened to the right. It disclosed a low and gloomy apartment, perhaps eight feet square. Six or seven black women lay in a heap, all sleeping except the one who opened the door. Something stirred in a heap of rags, and one of the party removing a dirty piece of carpet with his cane, discovered a new born child. It belonged to one of the sleepers in the rags, and had had an hour's experience of the tender mercies of this world! But these details are disgusting, and have gone far enough when they have shown those who have the common comforts of life how inestimably, by comparison, they are blessed! For one, I had never before, any adequate idea of poverty in cities. I did not dream that human beings, within the reach of human aid, could be abandoned to the wretchedness which I there saw—and I have not described the half of it, for the delicacy of your readers would not bear it, even in description. And all these horrors of want and abandonment lie almost within sound of your voice, as you pass in Broadway?—The officers sometimes make a descent & carry off swarms to Blackwell's Island, for all the inhabitants of the Five Points are supposed to be criminals and vicious—but still thousands are there, subjects for tears and pity, starving, like rats & dogs, with the sensibilities of human beings.

As we returned, we heard screams and fighting on every side, and the officers of the watch were carrying off a party to the lock up house. We descended once more to the grand ball room, and found the dance going on very merrily. Several very handsome mulatto women were in the crowd, and a few young men about town, mixed up with the blacks; and altogether it was a picture of 'amalgamation' such as I had never before seen.—I was very glad to get out of the neighborhood, leaving behind me, I am free to confess, all discontent with my earthly allotment. One gentleman who was with us left behind him something of more value, having been robbed at Almack's of his keys pencil case, and a few dollars, the contents of two or three pockets. I wind up my 'notes' with the hope that the true picture I have drawn may touch some moving spirit of benevolence in private societies or in the Common Council, and that something may soon be done to alleviate the horrors of the Five Points.

THE LAST MOMENTS OF A SUICIDE.—COLONEL SHELTON.

In noticing the death of Colonel Shelton by suicide, the Vicksburg Sentinel says he was a kind and affectionate father, and was humane in all the relations of life. He left some memorials behind him, in which the horrors of his mind, during the period which immediately preceded his death, are forcibly depicted.—No one can read these hasty notes with other feelings than sympathy for the fate of the wretched man.

20th. I fear my fate is sealed.—Graves will do nothing to-day, and Crane trusted me with their funds. If I am deceived, I cannot survive it. My fortune is gone—my credit also. If I am deceived, I cannot meet my friends who have relied on me. How am I to meet my God! Must my destroyer live and I die? Oh God! how awful! Yet it is better to die by my own hands, than live in agony; or meet my God with my own, than the blood of another on my hands. It must be, if I am deceived—Monday, Tuesday, 10 o'clock. No better. What is to be done? Night, 11 o'clock—I have received nothing but promises, depending on Government. The truth is, my warrants have been used to fill up examination. As far as gone, the specie is in amount full. If the investigation was over, or excitement at an end, I would receive all gold, for as much as I need at present to satisfy all who have entrusted me.

22d. The question now is, will those persons continue to delay longer? I am sure myself that all is safe—if they do not I die to-day by my own hands.—Oh God forgive me! Oh God, take care of my wife and little ones.

The following is a copy of a note left upon the bank of the river, and supposed to have been written just before his death:

Before I take this dreadful leap, I swear before the living God, that Graves has all the funds I could get. It was invested in state warrents, left under the promise that gold should be paid at par as soon as the investigation was over—all is gone.

The only warrent which I can describe I have no doubt are in the Treasury:

An old Warrant, $1226.

Tracy Warrant, $636, belonging to T. P. Ware, $875 wrapped in Tracy's account, left as collateral security, belonging to W. R. Cryne.

I further swear I have not a dollar—my family has. Mr. Graves has $7283, and about $400 besides; not one cent have I received unless it be $300, borrowed of Mr. Thomas, and $291 of E. Graves; so help me God!

W. H. SHELTON.

March 30, 1843.

FATE OF THE INDIANS.

In the splendid region of the 'far west,' which lies between Missouri and the Rocky Mountains, there are living at this moment on the prairies various tribes, who, if left to themselves, would continue for ages to live on the buffalo which cover the plains. The skins of these animals, however, have become valuable to the whites, and accordingly, this beautiful, verdant country, and these brave and independent people have been invaded by white traders, who, by paying to them a pint of whiskey for each skin, (or 'robe,' as they are termed in America) which sell at New York for ten or twelve dollars, induce them to slaughter these animals in immense numbers, leaving their flesh the food of the Indian, to rot and putrify on the ground. No admonition or caution can arrest for a moment the propelling power of the whiskey; accordingly in all directions these poor thoughtless beings are seen furiously riding under its influence in pursuit of their game, or in other words, in fatal exchange of food for poison. It has been very attentively calculated by traders, who manage to collect per annum from 150,000 to 200,000 buffalo skins, that at the rate at which these animals are now disposed of, in ten years they will all be killed off. Whenever that event happens, Mr. Catlin very justly prophesies that 250,000 Indians, now living in a plain of nearly three thousand miles in extent must die of starvation and become a prey to wolves, or that they must either attack the powerful neighbouring tribes of the Rocky Mountains, or in the utter phrenzy of despair, rush upon the white population in the forlorn hope of dislodging it. In the two latter alternatives there exists no chance of success, and we have therefore the appalling reflection before us, that these 250,000 Indians must soon be added to the dismal list of those who have already withered and disappeared, leaving their country to bloom and flourish in the possession of the progeny of another world.—*Quarterly Review.*

TREES.—It is a custom in Turkey, says Dr. Walsh, to plant a PLATURNUS ORIENTALIS, (button wood tree) on the birth of a son; and a cypress on the death of one. Were this custom adopted in the U. States, it would give us, at the end of forty years, about twenty millions of trees more than we shall probably have, a consideration of no mean importance to posterity. And were the trees to be planted by the roadside, most of our public highways would at the end of the period, be converted into delightful avenues.—Let it be remembered that the road from Strasburg to Munich, a distance of 250 miles, is already an avenue of fruit trees.

PENALTY FOR AMBITION.—A correspondent of the Buffalo Advertiser, writing from Albany says:

'Last evening the Governor General of Canada, Sir Charles Metcalfe, attended by a numerous *suite*, arrived here from Boston, on his way to his hyper-borean empire. He is weather-bound here—having made an unsuccessful attempt to push reaches 'John Brown's Tract,' where it is said, the snow lies eight fee', I imagine he will sigh for some of the tropical luxuries of Hindostan and the West Indies, where he has spent much of his life.—What a contrast must a Canadian winter present to the eternal summer and scorching heat of the tropics. Yet these are alike braved by puny man in pursuit of the baubles—honor, wealth, power.—Does Sir Charles look back four short years, since the office with which he is invested was created, and reflect on the fate of his predecessors? Durham & Sydenham are under the clods of the valley, and Bagot past all hope of recovery. Here's food for ambition."

SHOCKING ACCIDENT ON THE CONCORD RAIL ROAD.—A SOULLESS VICTIM OF A SOULLESS CORPORATION.—On Saturday last, (says Hill's N. H. Patriot, Concord,) as the upward train of cars, due here at 11 o'clock, A. M., were proceeding at a rapid rate between Goff's Falls Bridge & Manchester, a man was discovered lying upon the track in such a manner that while his head barely projected across one of the rails, his neck lay immediately upon it. The engineer almost instantaneously reversed the steam of the locomotive; but the cars had come so near that the breaks were not effectually applied until the train had passed over the unfortunate individual, and, shocking to relate, the head was completely severed from the body, and rolled over upon the outside of the road. The train was brought up after proceding about three rods. The engineer, paralyzed with fright, remained upon the engine unable to move. The news of the accident spread like wild fire among the passengers; many were so frightened that they were unable to leave their seats, while others were almost in an instant upon the spot where the tragedy occurred. The mutilated body was removed from the track and placed upon the snow bank. Life was extinct, and the unfortunate sufferer, consequently, beyond the reach of medical skill. One of the passengers picked up the head—another discovered blood upon the track, and several proposed to send immediately for a coronor, when it was discovered that the body was only a *man of straw*. The person who had picked up the head came to his senses, and found that he was holding a large *red cabbage*, of which the blood which had been discovered upon the track proved to be the juice. A bystander happening to recollect that it was the *first day of April*, the mystery was explained—the passengers resumed their seats, the train was again put in motion, and arrived here at the usual time.

The editor of the Vermont Republican thus poetically and pathetically appeals to his delinquent subscribers:

WOOD.

man chop down that tree,
Spare not a single bough,
Thy axe lay to its roots,
The Printer needs it *now!*

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