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The Planters' Advocate.

By THOMAS J. TURNER. "TRUTH ALONE IS KNOWLEDGE—KNOWLEDGE IS POWER." TWO DOLLARS PER ANNUM.

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Selected Poetry.

The Printer's Hohenlinden.

One of our subscribers, who has paid up his subscription "like a lady," for they are always punctual, has sent us the following. There are few printers but recollect "the spectre." We wish some of our readers, who are "far back in the woods," would read it carefully, and then prepare to "come up to time."

In seasons when our funds are low,
Subscribers are provoking slow,
And new supplies keep up the flow,
Of dimes departing rapidly.

But we shall see a sadder sight,
When duns come in from morn till night,
Commanding every sixpense bright
To be forked over speedily.

Our bonds and due bills are arrayed,
Each seal and signature displayed—
The holders they must be paid,
With threats of law and chancery.

Then to despair we're almost driven,
There's precious little fun in livin',
When our last copper's rudely riven
From hands that held it lovingly.

But larger yet these dues shall grow,
When interest's added on below,
Lengthening our chain a foot or so,
While gazing at them hopelessly.

'Tis so, that scarce have we begun
To plead for time upon a dun,
Before there comes another one,
Demanding pay ferociously.

The prospect darkens: on ye brave,
Who would our very bacon save;
Waive, patrons, all your pretexts waive,
And pay the printer honestly!

Oh, it would yield us pleasure sweet,
A few delinquents now to meet,
Asking of us a clean receipt,
For papers taken regularly.

Laughable Sketch.

From Porter's "Spirit of the Times."

JOHN BEALLE'S ACCIDENT:

OR,

HOW THE WIDOW DUDU TREATED INSANITY.

BY OMEGA.

Friendship is constant in all other things,
Save in the office and affairs of—SPORT.
SHAKSPERE IMPROVED.

In the domain of Momus, all things are considered fair, as in love and war. Such, at least, was the private opinion, publicly illustrated, of John Bealle and his friend, John Smith—a brace of inveterate wags, residing in the sister States of Alabama and Mississipi, whose "constant care" seemed to be, maugre their intimate friendly relations, the merciless exercise of each other in that species of fun, viz: practical joking.—The friendship of these gentlemen—compared with which that of Orestes and Pylades, or Damon and Pythias, was a mild form of the disease—was of long standing; of such antiquity, indeed, that it might be said (if it was not for the fact that one of the party has not *yet* joined the "noble army of *martyrs*," meaning married men, and therefore might take it in high dudgeon) to have dated back to that remote period "whereof the memory of (young) men runneth not to the contrary." Suffice it to say, that their intimacy had never been broken, and, that it deserved to be classed among the institutions known as "time-honored." That these amicable relations were preserved through a series of years and a multiplicity of mad pranks, was mainly attributable to the circumstance, perhaps, that in their joking vocation, they were very equally matched, and that the game was generally "diamond cut diamond." Victory perched as often on the standard of one as off the other; if John, of Mobile, was for the nonce "under the hack," he set to work as energetically as he did in the mines of California, and labored, until, from the depths of his invention, he dug up something "*precious*" with which to pay off old scores, and turn the laugh upon his friend—well satisfied, as indeed would most men have been, TO GET EVEN with so adroit a manager of a hoax as the inimitable John, of Beallesville.

It happened that in the last jocose rencontre between the individuals above named, that the entire Smith family, and its numerous connexion, had been, in the representative person of John, of Mobile, incontinently *sold*, "lock, stock and barrel." Such a misfortune, occurring as it did on the even of his departure from the city of Tuskaloosa, in whose bracing and health-restoring atmosphere he had been sojourning during the sultry August month, to the lively village of Beallsville, in Mississippi, was really intolerable, for the reason, that want of time prevented his resort to the *lex talionis* in order to relieve himself, and, there being few objects along the road to divert the mind of the traveler, he must, perforce, as he jogged along his lonely way, be chewing the cud of "sweet or bitter fancy," according as, in the slang of the politicians, his "antecedents" might have been exceptionable or otherwise. That our traveler's reflections were not of the most pleasant description, might have been inferred from the sourness of his countenance, and the undeserved application of the spur to the spirited animal he rode; and a fair clew to the nature of his mental occupation might have been had in the following words, which fell with indescribable emphasis and earnestness from his lips:

"If I don't get *even* with him, durn MY BUTTONS!!!"

Having given audible expression to his resolution, and clenched it with *round* security, our traveler seemed to think that he had done all that manhood could require at his hands at present; and banishing from his mind the late disturbing cares, he jogged on merrily, alternately humming the air of some lately imported *scholtish*, singing an affecting description of his leave-taking with his "OWN MARY ANN," and winding up, gaily, by making the woods resound with the music and comforting philosophy of, "TRUST TO LUCK."

Night coming on apace, our musical way-farer drew rein in front of a commodious looking dwelling by the roadside, and alighted, saught and obtained permission to pass the night. On entering the piazza, the new-comer was politely saluted by the lady of the house—a matronly looking woman, somewhat passed the meridian of life, of healthy, buxom appearance, dressed neatly in plan attire, with a rather comely set of features. In her general air and bearing, he who runs might have read, "I am the monarch of all I survey."

"Warm and dusty traveling, sir," she said; "have you ridden far to-day?"

"Not very," was the response, "I only came from Tuskaloosa."

"Indeed," rejoined the hostess, "may you live in Tuskaloosa?"

"No, madam," he replied, "I live now in Mobile, but am traveling through the country, and am, at present, making my way to the plantation of my friend, John Bealle, in the neighborhood of Bealsville, in Mississippi. Do you know how far it is to Beallsville?"

After giving the distance, and informing the traveler that she was well acquainted with Col. Bealle—that the Colonel always stopped and staid all night at her house in passing that road—showering, meanwhile, sundry encomiums on the good qualities and amiable traits of the aforesaid Colonel, she launched out as follows:

"Sakes alive! That Mobile is an awful place. I would't live there for all the money on earth. How can you live there! Its worse than some of them places Scriptur tells about it. I hate it; I despise it. Nothing would do my old man, Nimrod Dudu, about twelve years ago, but he must get on a steamboat and go down to sell our little cotton in the everlastin' pestiferous hole. Well, he came back after so long a time, but he was no more the same man than I am the same man; so altered that nobody hardly knew him. From that day he naturally pined away, and pined away, until, about a month after he got home, his wiskey begun to disagree with him, and he turned in and died. Do you know what I think was the matter with him?"

Breathless and excited, she paused, and keeping her eye fixed searchingly on the face of the guest, she leaned forward, and in a high stage-hiss, whispered, pausing between each word—

"I THINK—HE—WAS—PISONED!!!"

Waiting a moment to allow her auditor an opportunity to recover from the shock which the astounding intelligence concerning the death of Nimrod was expected to produce, she opened again with a revelation which she fully calculated would remove all scepticism in the mind of her listener, as it had in her own mind, unquestionably added "confirmation strong as proof of holy writ," to the correctness of her surmises—pronouncing each word separately, in a whisper, and with startling emphasis—

"And—Col. Bealle—thinks—so—too!!!"

"When, madam," asked our traveler, working himself up to the old lady's high fever-heat, and showing an intense anxiety in his manner, "When did Col. Bealle say he thought so?"

"Only about six months ago," replied the widow. "Though I 'spicioned that Nimrod never come by his death fairly, I kept my 'spicions to myself for eleven long years, till I got so full of 'm that I think I should have *busted* if I hadn't told somebody. But you look like a gentleman, and being that you are a friend of the Colonel's, I'll tell you how I come to tell him.—It was six months ago last Monday that the Colonel came along this road, and put up here, as he always does, to stay the night. After supper he took a seat, right where you are now sitting, and looked me straight in the eyes, with the most searching and 'sinuating looks I ever saw, says he to me, says he, 'Widow!'—I declare-to gracious, Mister, my heart jumped right spang up in my mouth as he spoke—'Widow,' says he, 'what is the matter? you look out o' sorts. Tell me what pesters you.' And then, Mister, if you could only have seen how he rolled round his his eyes and held his breath as he went on to say—'Widow Dudu, you've got something on your mind; tell it; don't let concealment, like a *worrum* in a rose-bud, eat up your damaged face.' Mercy me! I never shall forget them words—the curiousest I ever heard. Fjust felt that the Colonel read it all from my looks, so I made a clean breast of it, and told him plump out my 'spicions about Nimrod's death. When I was done the Colonel set a little while, looked sorter dumbflustered, then kinder puckered up his mouth, whistled a tune, and then looking savigrously riled, he said to me, says he—'Widow, you're right; I think he must have been *pisoned;* I've heard of men being *pisoned* in Mobile before. It's a dangerous place; I always go there in fear and trembling; and the worst of it is, you can't find out who does the *pisoning*. I thought I was *pisoned* once myself, at Holt's, but it were off. I sorter think a man gets *pisoned* generally Who goes there, and no particular person does it.—Nor do I know what sort of "pison" they use; if they used *minerals*, it could be found out if the man had been dead fifty years; but if they used *vegetables*, it couldn't be found out a minute and a half after he's dead. But I'll tell you what I'll do, widow; the next time I go to Mobile, I'll inquire around and see what I can pick up about the way they pison them off there, and let you know; for I'm sure it would be a great comfort and consolation for you to learn what killed your poor husband.' Now warn't this kind of him, Mister? O, he is the best naturedest, the best heartedest man I ever saw!"

"Madam," solemnly responded the gust, "I agree with you entirely in the estimate of my friend, Col. Beall's character; there is not a higher-souled, nobler-hearted, or more generous-spirited man in the universe, and that is the reason his misfortune is so much lamented."

"Misfortune?" eagerly inquired the widow, "has any misfortune befallen Col. Bealle?"

"I am surprised," replied the traveler, assuming deep seriousness, "that you have not heard of it. It occurred near seven months ago; whilst riding in a carriage in Mobile, the horses took fright, ran away, smashed up the vehicle, and poor John's head struck with such violence against the curb-stone, that it addled his brain to the extent that he has been *crazy*, off and on, ever since."

"Saints look down!" exclaimed the widow, with much feeling. "Oh, that rotten place, Mobile! Them it don't pison, it knocks out their brains with curb-stones! Mercy on us, I shall never find out now whether it was *vegetables* or *min'rals* killed my poor husband. How long ago did you say it was since the accident happened? Seven months? Man alive, the Colonel was crazy then when he was here last, and rolled his eyes about so awfully. Oh, what a risk I run—all the white person in the house—all night with a crazy man, and the niggers asleep as sound as mill-stones! The Lord make us thankful! Does he ever try to kill anybody?"

"Never," was the reply, "except when the paroxysm is upon him; then he requires to be restrained by force; then he is really dangerous. As a general thing he is mild, good-natured and quiet; it is only when something occurs to excite him that he gets into these destructive rages; but his friends know what brings them on, and being careful to avoid them, he goes along with his business, and behaves with such good sense that an acquaintance who had never heard of his misfortune would never suspect that he was crazy."

"And pray, sir," inquired the widow, with eager interest, "what are the things that throw him into the rages and convulsions?"

"There are only a few things," replied the romancer, "that produce this unhappy effect upon him. The taste of coffee, the sight of milk, or butter or eggs, or fried chicken, or cotton in any shape coming in contact with his skin, as sheets, towels, pillowcases, &c. These things bring on a convulsion immediately, which lasts about two hours, and then he becomes perfectly quiet and tractable, and seems, after it is all over, to have no recollection of the fearful paroxysm through which he has passed. Still, there is one thing that excites him more ungovernably than any I have yet mentioned, and that is, being *told he is crazy*.—With the information I have given you, if you will be upon your guard, and give your servants suitable directions, you may, in case Col. Bealle, in passing here next week, should stop to stay all night, have a tolerable comfortable time with him. But you must be careful, and remember the coffee, the milk, the butter, the eggs and the cotton sheets, pillow-cases, towels, &c."

"Careful!" exclaimed the widow, now fearfully excited; "I'll take my affidavy that I will be careful that neither he nor any other crazy man sets foot in my house. But what does the poor man eat, and on what does he sleep?"

"He is allowed nothing but the plainest and coarsest diet," was the reply; "corn bread, and bacon and water; as to sleeping, when linen sheets cannot be had, blankets are substituted, which are disagreeable enough this warm weather; but what can't be cured must be endured."

"Well, I am really sorry for him," broke forth the true woman's heart in the widow's bosom. "I am as sorry for him as if he had been my own kith and kin. But it's no use for him to come here, and be wanting to stay all night; it would be the everlastin' death of me!"

"Madam," said the traveler, evincing much feeling, "I trust you will pardon me for saying that I think you are very wrong, for threatening to turn away from your house an old friend like Col. Bealle, whose misfortune should rather excite your commiseration and kind office than provoke ill-usage and harsh treatment."

"Well," said the widow, relenting, and showing, by her manner, that the appeal had not been made in vain, "I should certainly not be so unfeeling as to turn an old friend away from my house; but, the Lord be praised! I hope he may not come."

The conversation had just reached this point, when, supper being announced, our imaginative Mobile friend did ample justice to the excellent fare under which the table groaned. Indeed, the widow Dudu's house was famed, far and near, for all those substantial comforts, both in the eating and sleeping departments, which are so highly prized by that class of persons who delight to "take their ease at their inn."

The next morning before our traveler set out, he took pains to refresh his hostess' memory concerning the forbiden things which brought the paroxysms on his friend, duly impressing her with the fact that his friend became most outrageous and ungovernable when told that he was crazy, and that he would deny his insanity most vehemently.

Thus having accomplished, to his entire satisfaction, his mission—every body has a mission, now-a-days, or wants one—our ingenious romancer suddenly found himself in the exact situation, so graphically described by the historian, John Phœnix, of our ancestors, at the fourth and last charge of the British, at the battle of Bunker's Hill: viz: like them, he recollected that he had urgent and pressing business at home, that demanded his immediate presence; and acting on this opportune remembrance, it is said, and there are many who believe the story to be true, that grass did not grow under his horse's hoofs between the widow Dudu's and the city of Mobile.

In less than a week after the occurences above related took place, and whilst they were still fresh in the memory of the widow, as well as every servant about the premises, John Bealle drove up to her gate, and, springing quickly from his buggy—for John does everything in a hurry, especially if it is a generous act he intends to perform—he bounded with a light step, and his usual joyous manner, over the intermediate space between the gate and the house, and, in an instant afterwards, before the old lady, who was standing in the piazza when he passed the gate, had time to satisfy herself fully as to his personal identity, he was wringing her hand, and greeting her in the most friendly and familiar style.—If her defunct Nimrod, in all his grave-clothes' ghastliness, had suddenly popped upon her, and gone through the same mode of salutation, it is highly probable that she would not have shown a greater degree of trepidation and amazement. Partially recovering herself after a manifest effort, she begun to greet her visitor in return, but it only ended in a faint and half-hysterical "How-de-do, Col. Bealle?"

"Never better in my life as to health," quickly responded the hilarious and open-hearted Colonel, whose confidence, in the kind feelings the widow had ever manifested towards him, prevented him from observing anything unusual in her manner, "but as to hunger, I am more ravenous than a whole regiment of Russian wolves.—I have travelled all day without breaking my fast, and have a villainously-destructive feeling about me, when I think of your dairy, larder and henhouse."

"O Lord, look down and have mercy on us all!" in trembling accents, petitioned the widow.

"[illegible] butter-milk in the house?" the newly arrived went on to inquire. Without seeming to have noticed her fervent ejaculation, "I feel as if I could drink a full pitcher of my favorite beverage, butter-milk, before I take it from my mouth. But what's in the wind now? what are you staring at?"

"Gracious Redeemer, protect me now!" piously supplicated the affrighted woman, who thinking she already saw indications of an approaching paroxysm, fully believed that her time had come.

"Gracious what?" hurriedly exclaimed the lover of butter-milk, sorely puzzled to divine the meaning of her pious supplications, and now, for the first time, directing his attention to her wild and unnatural appearance, "I am no bugaboo or monster that you should be standing and gazing at with your eyes sticking out of your head, but a tired and dusty traveler, who at present, more than to be stared at, desires a basin and water, soap and *towel*."

"Heavenly Parent! what will become of me?" saying which the old lady darted with the speed of light past the guest, who, just as he had finished speaking, was making his way along the piazza to the end, where water and washing facilities were to be had, and seizing the neat white *cotton* towel, which hung in its accustomed place, disappeared with it before the traveler had time to comprehend what she was doing.

"Well," said he, soliloquizing, "that was a rare shine—a queer kick, indeed! O, I understand now; some one had wiped their dirty hands on that fowl, and she has taken it away with a view of getting a clean one. Still, there was no necessity of being in such a devil of a hurry about it. But women are curious creatures, and the old lady is the tidiest, neatest house-keeper in the country, and I verily believe that anything like uncleanliness about her house, her table, her cooking, her furniture or bedding, would drive her raving distracted. And how wonderfully pious she has become; something's wrong."

Having finished his ablusions and whilst waiting for the towel to be replaced, (which, by-the-by, was *not* replaced,) his attention was attracted to the manœuvres of a couple of the stoutest and most able-bodied of the negroes belonging to the widow, who, from their motions, seemed to desire to enter the piazza, and yet hesitated, from some cause, to do so.

"Toney," said the Colonel, addressing one of the negroes, and thinking some information might be drawn from him which would throw light on the eccentric behavior of their mistress, "has any thing happened to your mistress?"

"*Sa?*" grunted the negro, the picture of idiotic fright and stupidity.

"Has anything, out of the common run, occurred to your mistress?" reiterated the Colonel.

"*Sa?*" burst forth from both negroes at once, and both seemingly stricken with terror.

"You black rascals," said the questioner warming up a little, "if you don't stop stating at me, and find the use of your tongues, I'll cut both your heads off."

"O Lord!" burst in a groan of agony from their lips at once.

"Well," said the Colonel, *sotto voce*, and as if addressing himself, "this is getting rather interesting. I believe that both mistress and negroes are afflicted with the same pious disease."

Returning to the charge once more, our enterprising friend said, addressing the two negroes, "Has a camp-meeting been held about here lately?"

"Yes, massa Colonel, yes, sir," both the darkies replied in the same breath.

"Did many get religion?" inquired he.

"Lord bress you, massar," said Toney, recovering somewhat the power of speech, "most everybody went up an' took a chance. Ole Missus tried two days, and then she *come through a-tarring*."

"Yes, yes" said the heretofore puzzled Colonel, thinking aloud; "I understand the the case now, I think. If these camp-meetings do a great deal of good, they, sometimes, likewise do much injury. The old lady has gone there—got religion, and got half-crazy in the bargain—and now cuts her piety so thick, that she must interlard her common conversation with it, and *'hence the milk in the coca-nut.'*"

Having, at length, satisfactorily settled, in his own mind, the cause of the eccentric behavior of his old friend, Mrs. Dudu, and experiencing lively hints from an appetite which had grown, prospectively, "upon what it fed on"—for if the widow excelled in anything, it was in her suppers—our traveler was not slow in obeying the summons to the table, which he had never failed to find loaded with the choicest and most savory esculents that the season and country afforded.—His surprise may well be conceived of—description is powerless to paint it—when, taking a seat at the table, and looking around, he discovered nothing for his meal but *corn bread* and *bacon*.—And no Isaac, in olden or modern times—no Israelite, in or out of Christendom, ever turned up his nose at this homely dish, with more ineffable scorn and contempt, than did our hungry Mississippian on the present occasion. Throwing himself back in his chair, he inquired of one of the two "big, buck negroes" in attendance—neither of whom, be it known, were the regular dining-room servants of the house, but who, for reasons best known to the widow, had been especially detailed for the present service—as follows:

"Where is your mistress?"

"Gone to bed, massa."

"Gone to the d—— Hem! Have you nothing else to eat but what I see before me?"

"No, massa."

"What's in that pitcher?"

"Water, massa."

"Have you got any milk?"

"No, massa."

"Any butter?"

"No, massa."

And so on to the end of the catalogue of forbidden articles. The astounded traveler, as if doubting his own identity, turned sharply on Toney and catechised thus:

"Do you know who I am?"

"Oh, yes, massa."

"Then I wish you would tell me, for, hang me, if I don't begin to distrust who I am. Who am I?"

"You am massa John Bealle, sar."

"And what's your name, imp of darkness?"

"Toney, sar."

"And what's your mistress' name!"

"Widow Dudu, sar."

The last three questions and answers did the business for the Widow, who, had stolen noiselessly from her chamber, and was a breathless listener at the dining-room door. An angel of light could not have more fully impressed her with a belief of the insanity of her guest. Nor did she wait to hear any more, but, hastening rapidly back to her bedroom, closed and double-bolted the door behind her, ensconsed herself between a couple of feather-beds, which, considering the thermometer sotood 98° in the shade, was quite a *snug* berth, when she addressed herself to sleep.

"That balm of hurt minds, great Nature's second course!"

as the sleep-murmuring Macbeth so aptly terms it.

The Colonel, who knew nothing of this eavesdropping, or of the dose he had unwittingly administered to the lady of the house, sat silently at the table, after the conversation above related occurred, with a countenance indicative of trouble and perplexity, and with a vast deal of "speculation in his eyes."

At length, spurred by an appetite that knew no distinction in dishes, he overcame his repugnance to the coarse diet before him, and, in spite of early prejudices and hasty first impressions, made a tolerably hearty meal on corn-bread, bacon—and limpid water!

After which, complaining of fatigue, he was escorted by the brace of stalwart "ebonies," who kept in close attendance, to a bed-room in the second story. Here dismissing the obsequious servors and closing the door, he proceeded leisurely, meanwhile, "wrapped in sonorous and harrassing thought," to divest himself of his outward habiliments, when turning to the bed into which he was about to spring, he discovered a *bed*, it is true, but nothing on it, save blankets and pillows without *slips*. Inwardly cursing the servants for their negligence in not putting on a spread and sheets on the bed, or cases on the pillows, and fully resolved to "blow up" all hands about their carelessness in the morning, he went to the door and endeavored to open it, intending to call for the indispensable bed-clothing. After tuging away violently, for some time, he found that his labor was in vain; that the door remained firmly closed, resisting his utmost strength. He next fell to kicking and thumping the door to burst it open, but *that* door was not to be burst open by kicks and thumps. All other resources failing, he called aloud:

"Somebody come here!" No answer.

"Fire!" "Murder!" "Water!" "Man overboard!" "Woman drowning!" "Steamboat blown up!" "Cars run off!" "Hello!" "The Devil!"

No answer.

"Toney!" shouted the exasperated prisoner, at the top of his voice, "Open the door, or I'll set fire to the house!"

"Spec if you does, you be fus' one burn up," answered the individual addressed, from the other side of the door.

"What's this door fastened for on the outside? Undo it, you infernal scoundrel, or I'll break it down and cut your head off."

"Massa Colonel, you better be still. Ole missus have door fastened, and say you mus'nt come out till mornin'."

After many bootless surges against the door, repeated fruitless attempts to further replies from the black sentinel outside, our traveler, exhausted, took a seat on the side of the bed, and began to ponder seriously on his situation. The more he pondered on the matter, the farther he was from arriving at a satisfactory conclusion. The current of his thoughts was about in this wise:

"If they intend to murder me and rob me, so much pains would not have been taken to put me on my guard. But to be safe, I'll take out my pistols and have them handy; yet I know I shall have no need for them. And how extravagantly ludicrous and ridiculous the whole thing looks. If it wasn't that the old lady is one of the most sober-sided and conscientious of women, I should largely suspect that there was some infernal hoax about the whole matter; but such a conjecture is the sheerest nonsense. * * * * I have it; the old woman is deucedly superstitious, and I heard some time ago that the spiritual-rappers had been along this way. Yes, yes, it's as clear as mud—she's a *medium!* ha! ha! ha! and has had a revelation about me that has scared her wits away. What a fool I was not to see into the thing before! What is this world a coming to?"

It is unnecessary to pursue any further the Colonel's speculations. Suffice it, that lying down on the bed, intending to continue his investigations into the mysterious affair, he was so worn out by the fatigues of the day to be overcome by sleep, and never waked until broad daylight next mornin, when he was roused by knocks at the door, and the announcement that "breakfast was ready."

Hastily dressing himself, and performing his ablutions in his room, from whence the widow failed to remove the *cotton* towel, he descended to the breakfast room, as eager for something to eat, as he was to get an explanation of the enigmatical proceedings of the past evening. Saluting the mistress of the house, as she sat, stiff as whalebone and buckram, at the head of the table, guarded by her two herculean servitors, and looking as if she had valorously made up her mind to "face the music," he took a seat at the table, a hasty glance at which told him that his breakfast was to be a "piece of the same cloth" as his supper, (i. e.) that it consisted of no other viands than corn-bread, bacon and water.

"Mrs. Dudu," said the Colonel, looking calmly at her, and speaking in a mild tone of voice, "do you believe in the Bible?"

"I thank my God that I do," nervously responded the widow, not at all relishing the unorthodox insinuation conveyed by the question.

"Do you pretend to shape your conduct by its holy teachings?" pursued the queriest.

"I endeavor, with divine assistance, to do so," was the devout response.

"Did you ever read the 19th chapter in LEVITICUS?" continued he.

"I reckon," said the old lady, stammering, "I reckon I have?"

"Do you remember the divine injunctions that chapter contains?"

"I don't know, exactly, as I do," answered the lady, troubled beyond measure, and not at all prepared for the "course of chaticism" through which she was being put.

"If you will be so good as to send for your Bible, I would like, before we begin our breakfast, to refresh your memory by reading to you a portion of the 19th chapter of Leviticus," continued the catechist, in a serious and solemn tone.

The widow was both astounded and disconcerted by this proposition. By this, there is no intention to intimate that the Colonel's religious opinions were not of the most orthodox stamp, but a more intimate friend than the widow had ever claimed to be, might have been pardoned for being astounded or for mistrusting his own senses, had he heard the Sacred Volume called for, at breakfast, by the hero of our story. Of course the book was brought and placed before him, and after turning over the leaves awhile, he stoopped and said:

"Mrs. Dudu, I read from the 33rd and 34th verses, 19th chapter of Leviticus, the words:

"'And if a stranger sojourn with thee, thou shalt not vex him. But the stranger that dwelleth with you, he shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself. I am the Lord, thy God.'

"Now, madam, with this precept staring you in the face, what am I to think of the manner in which I was vexed, worried, locked up and made a prisoner of, in your house last night? You seem confounded, and well you may be."

"Indeed, Colonel," said the old lady, in much confusion, for the "scriptur argument" had opened all the avenues of her heart towards him, "I'm sure I did not mean to vex you or worry you.—You know that my house, and every thing is it, is at your service, for I haven't a friend in the world that I set more store by than I do you.—But you know circumstances alters cases."

"They do, indeed, madam," replied the traveller, with some bitterness, "as I have the pain and mortification of exemplifying in this house lately. I demand, madam, to be informed why you directed your grants to fasten the door of my room last night as soon as I entered it, keeping me a prisoner until this morning?"

"O, Lord," said the widow, fearing to make the disclosure that would bring on the "most ungovernable of paroxysms," "I can't tell you; it would be worse for us all if I told you. Besides, you won't believe it. Lord have mercy on me!"

There were such unmistable evidences of real distress pictured in her countenance, and betrayed in her general manner and bearing, that he forebore to press her after the peremptory fashion he had at first assumed, but adopting a more respectful tone, he said:

"Well, madam, I certainly shall not insist on an explanation, if it would be so unpleasant to your feelings; though a man should be readily excused for speaking peremptorily, who has been unceremoniously fastened up in a room all night, and asks the reason. But let that pass. I presume there will no harm in asking the cause of the scarcity of sheets, bed-spreads and pillow-cases? Has the rise in the price of cotton suggested this economy?"

"Bless your soul, sir, I have the greatest abundance of sheets, spreads and pillow-cases, and—and—but I must not tell you; it would make mischief; pray don't urge me," plead the distressed woman so beseechingly, as to disarm the gentleman from pursuing his inquiries further

"Madam, your wishes shall be law," replied the gallant and good natured Colonel, "since you request it, and think mischief would come of it, I shall not urge an explanation. Still you must excuse me for declaring your conduct is very strange and altogether unaccountable. I trust no mischief would ensue if you were to answer me as to whether the coons have swept your hen-house? that you have banished the chicken from your table; or that your hens have ceased to lay? that you have no eggs; or that your cows have gone dry? that you have no milk or butter;—and why is coffee interdicted on your table as a beverage?"

"Spare me, Colonel," piteously supplicated the widow; "God knows I would tell you if I dared; but I would be running the risk of my life to do so." I don't think Christian people should fly in the face of Providence. If you knew all you wouldn't blame me, or think hard of me, indeed, you wouldn't."

"This is decidedly interesting; nay, it borders on the romantic," said the oft-baffled guest; "I am at the end of my row. Madam, you are the most incomprehensible woman I ever saw—one side of a lunatic, one side of a saint. Every word you utter is ambiguous, every question a puzzle, every look an enigma, your whole conduct a riddle. And as I have but little fancy for or skill in the solution of mysteries, a mystery your conduct may remain until the crack of doom for me. I will trouble you to order my horse and buggy."

The natural vexation and anger which this speech indicated, and which it was impossible any longer to conceal or subdue, had the effect to precipitate matters and hasten the *denouement*.

"O, Colonel Bealle! Colonel Bealle!" exclaimed the poor woman, half distracted between contending emotions; fear of her life on one hand, if she disclosed to him his dire misfortune, and the certain prospect of losing a highly-prized friend if she made no disclosure, "if you knew all and believed it, you would regret this harshness to the longest day you live. But if I die for it, I will tell you. *Look, Toney!—be ready, Jim!* You—haven't—been—the—same—man—since—the—Ac-ci-DNT!!!"

"Accident? what accident?" burst vehemently from the amazed Colonel.

"*The* accident! don't you recollect? Did they never tell you?" said the widow, carried away by an excitement which loosened her tongue and caused it, as Mr. Weller figuratively remarks, to "roll on like a barrow with the veel greased," "when the horses got scared, and run away with the carriage, broke it all to splinters, and smashed your head agin the curb-stones, which brought on the misfortune."

"Misfortune!" echoed the Colonel, now completely bewildered. "What kind of misfortune? Speak, woman."

"Oh, Lord, sir, you havn't been the *same man* since the accident! For God's sake, don't kill me," supplicated she, thinking she had let the "cat out."

"I am not the same man?" ejaculated he, more and more astounded. "(Saving your presence, madam, I'll be d—d if you are any longer the same woman! You've lost your mind! you are demented! you are stark, staving *mad!*"

"Lord have mercy on your soul!" yelled the widow, now wild and furious, "the boot's on the other leg; it's *you!* it's you!!—you—are—CRAZY!!!"

"Ha! ha! ha! haw! haw! haw!" roared the Colonel, in a torrent of uncontrollable laughter, as he threw up both hands high above his head, and would have followed suit with his heels, but for the table at which he was still sitting.

The cachinatory explosion was suddenly cut short by a very unexpected circumstance. No sooner were his hands fairly elevated above his head, than Toney and Jim, acting under orders from a higher authority, each seizing a hand, intending to hold it fast during the paroxysm, which both mistress and servants now believed was coming on. A respectable row, or rather a fierce struggle ensued, which lasted two and a half minutes; at the end of which time the remains and fragments might be thus noted: the table was upset and had fewer legs than tables are wont to have, broken china and cockery were scattered very impartially around the room, corn bread and bakon "flay loose about," Mrs. Dudu had *vamoosed*—the widow and her favorite tabby having made themselves scarce early in the action—the Colonel was sprawling on the floor, with Toney and Jim holding him down as *easy* as they could, and the *finale* enriched and enlivened by the furious barking and yelping of a couple of curs, who, though not put down in the bill as among the "*dramatis personæ*," nevertheless performed a conspicuous part by way of musical accompaniment.

By dint of threats and promises to behave, our hero was, after a time, released and permitted to rise from the floor. Once more on his feet, it was "smartly mixed" in the Colonel's mind whether or not he shouldn't save the hangman a job and blow out the brains of his assailants on the spot, but the trembling and terror-stricken spectacle they presented disarmed him of his murderous intentions towards them. The next instant, seeking their mistress, he was resolved, at all hazards, to have an explanation of her conduct and of the indignity with which she had caused her servants to treat him. Finding, at length, that she had locked herself up in a room, he rapped at the door, and in a firm and decided tone of voice, addressed her:

"Madam, this 'hide-and-seek' game wont' do. I intend to have an explanation before I leave the house. Keep your door closed, if you choose, but an explanation I am determined to have, or I never will quit the premises."

"Mercy on me, Colonel," exclaimed the widow, from the interior of the room, in a smothered key, as coming from beneath a feather-bed, "I can't explain any more than I have already done. *You are crazy!* and, for the Lord's sake, don't murder me!"

"Madam," answered he, vehemently, "you are crazy yourself. I'll swear I am not crazy. Somebody has imposed upon you."

"I knew you would deny it," responded the voice from under the feather-bed; "but I'll swear to you that you *are* crazy."

"Who told you that I was crazy?" demanded our hero.

"A friend of yours," answered she from within, "who saw you when the horses ran away with the carriage in Mobile, and the accident occurred."

"What's his name?"

"He lives in Mobile, he said," she answered, "and his name, I think, is SMITH!!—JOHN SMITH!!!"

There were no more questions asked; there were no more answers from beneath the feather-beds; "the milk in the cocoa-cut" was most satisfactorily accounted for!

Spring into his buggy, which had been for some time in readiness, our indignant Mississippian drove rapidly away, muttering there-after, with teeth as he went, "I'll show that crittur', JOHN SMITH, a *kinck* worth two of that!" and, as the Patlanders say, "Be jabers! he kept his word entirely." OMEGA.

Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Talent and Genius.

BY BULWER.

Talent convinces—genius but excites;
This takes the reason, that the soul delights.
Talent from sober judgment takes its birth,
And reckoneiles the pinion to the earth;
Genius unsettles with desires the mind,
Contented not till earth be left behind;
Talent, the sunshine on a cultured soil,
Ripens the fruit by slow degrees for toil.
Genius, the sudden Iris of the skies,
On cloud itself reflects its wondrous dyes:
And, to the earth, in tears and glory given,
Claps in its airy arch the pomp of Heaven!
Talent gives all that vulgar critics need—
From its plain horn book learn the dull to read:
Genius, the Pythian of the beautiful,
Leaves its large truths a riddle to the dull—
[illegible] the Iris screens,
And fools on fools still ask, "What Hamlet means?"

An Old Fort.

In Florida, the old fort formerly called St. Marks, but since the purchase from Spain, Fort Marion, is constructed of coquina stone. The following is an interesting description of it:

The fort is just a century old, having been built in 1756. It cost immense sums of money, and is strong enough to have withstood, in its time, several formidable sieges. It is probably the most stupendous, and certainly the most interesting piece of masonry in the United States. It contains dungeons which are said to have witnessed scenes of inquisitorial atrocity, and whose floors have been stained by the bloody tyrannies of a dark and cruel age. There is a vast chapel and numerous guard-rooms for the accommodation of soldiers within its massive walls. The whole is surrounded by a moat which was formerly crossed by two ancient drawbridges.—Modeled after the old feudel forms of defence, each bastion is crowned by a turret for sentinels, and has an air of antiquity, bordering on the romantic, as well as being exceedingly picturesque.

Over the main entrance is engraved in solid rock, the arms of Spain, and an inscription in the Spanish, which informs the stranger that the fortress was finished in 1756, when Ferdinand VI ruled the dominions of the mother country. Don Alonzo Ferdinandos de Herida was Governor and Commander-in-Chief, and the Engineer of construction was Don Pedro de Brazassy Garay.

It is said that in 1819, when Florida was purchased by the United States, many of the old Spanish records, chronicles and archives, that could alone shed light upon the obscurity which clouds many portions of the early and eventful history of this region, were conveyed in secresy away to Cuba.

The Christian Religion.

The will of the late Hon. John M. Clayton, of Delaware, has been published. The first clause of it as follows:

"First—I leave to my friends and relatives as well as to all others who may think my opinion of any value, this testimonial, that the religion taught in the New Testament is the best that has been offered for adoption, both for this world and for that which is to come, and that Jesus Christ was the true Messiah, and will remain forever the Redeemer and Saviour of fallen man.—Let my humble testimony stand in favor of the Christian religion—I am deeply, thoroughly convinced of its truth."

SPARE THE BABIES."—We find the following kernel in Harper's weekly chaff measures of "Civilization," and prize it the more because so rare in that concern. Alluding to a Children's Fancy Dress Ball, it says:

Is it not enough that Fashion should seduce our wives and grown up daughters from home, its virtues, and its duties? Must it go into our nurseries, and be allowed to snatch up in its cold clutches the children from its mother's knee, before it has learned to stammer out "Lead us not into temptation," and the little one from its pillow, in the repose of innocence and sleep, and thrust them into the glare of gaslight, and an excitement as deadly to the heart as it is unwholesome to the body? Fashionable mothers! sacrifice yourselves, if you please, on the altar of Fashion, but spare the babies.

The Boston *Journal* says that passing one of the delivery windows at the post office, we overheard the following dialogue between the clerk in attendance and a dilapidated specimen of the "Green Isle:

Clerk—(Holding up the letter)—"Where do you live?"

Pat—"An' sure its meself that's not married at all."

"Where do you *live?*" again inquired the clerk.

Pat—"I have three *sisters* living around here somewhere."

Clerk—"I don't wish to know anything about your sisters, or whether you are married, but where you *live*."

Pat—"By the Holy St. Patrick, I don't live anywhere. *I make boots out in the country!*"

Romance and Revolvers.

The Emperor of Russia has lately performed an act of justice to a much injured and honorable American family, which reflects the highest credit on his government. The facts were given me by Mr. Sala, the principal writer for Dickens' Household Words, with whom I had the pleasure to dine at London, and who was an actor in the history I am going to give you. About eighteen months ago, a Miss Ward, from one of the Southern States, was married, at Florence, after a short courtship, to a Polish count, whose unpronounceable name escapes me at this moment. They were married before the American Consul, I believe. After living with Miss Ward maritally for three weeks, the count took French leave, one fine morning, carrying off his wife's jewelry as booty. A letter left behind informed Miss Ward of a fact of which she had been, till that moment, entirely ignorant, to wit: that any Russian subject not married according to the service recognised by the Greek Church and the Russian government was invalid and not binding, and that