msa_sc3415_scm3600-0055 ©Maryland State Archives

The Planters' Advocate.

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

Vol. 6. UPPER MARLBOROUGH, MARYLAND, WEDNESDAY MORNING, APRIL 1, 1857. No. 32.

A Tale of Parision Life.

The Adventures of a Basket of Peaches.

"WHEN YOU WISH TO PRESERVE AN ILLUSION, DON'T LOOK TOO FAR BENEATH THE SURFACE."

Twenty years ago, before Paris was encircled with a double girdle of railways, early fruits were naturally a much greater rarity than they are now-a-days. At the period we speak of, rare fruits, ripened in advance of the season, were sometimes grown in hot-houses in the neighborhood of Paris; but they were oftener brought from warm countries gilded by the sun's rays—from Italy, Spain, or Africa. In this way the lucky ones would have green peas, peaches, melons, and grapes, two months before every body else. Things of this sort cost their weight in gold; but if people had been obliged to pay for them in diamonds and precious stones, diamonds and precious stones would have been forthcoming for the purpose. Railways have done away with all this. Thanks to steam, baskets of dear vegetables and rare fruits are brought in advance of the season for one man as early as for another; and the result is that people cannot ruin themselves now-a-days on these luxuries of the palate.

Under the old system, that is twenty years ago, in 1836, towards the end of July, a dandy on the wrong side of forty, or, to use the expression of that day, a "lion sur le retour," M. Du Roseray was enjoying his cigar one morning after breakfast on the Boulevard des Italiens. Every body recollects that this belt of the great city was even then looked upon as the *Capital of the Capital.* He had walked about right and left long enough to have taken some two or three thousand steps, had eyed every passer and been eyed in turn, when he began to think such exercise a little monotonous. But what was he to do to kill time? Paris contains within its walls about fifteen hundred idlers of quality—rich and well-bred men who have a thousand resources at their disposal, but never know what to do with either their bodies or their heads. At length Du Roseray said to himself:

"I have looked enough at the carriages and the women passing and the men *rushing around.* Suppose I take the stores, the shops, the lower stories for my next study: there you are always sure to find dramas full of interest as well as novelty." With these words the cigar-smoker unconsciously extended his walk as far as the front of a fashionable market-store. Arrived there, he wiped his eye-glass with one corner of his handkerchief and halted. How much there is worth seeing in such a place! It is not generally known that the pink of Parisian society is forever on the road to or from shops of this sort. The truth is, that in spite of the fine Spartan airs we are pleased to give ourselves now and then, we are essentially the older sons and direct heirs of those Sybarites whose entire knowledge began and ended with the art of good-living. That is the reason why Du Roseray, cunningly lodged in ambuscade, with one eye half shut and the other wide-awake, could see going in and out thirty or forty illustrious personages—the flower of the diplomatic corps, financiers, artists, speculators, deputies and peers of France of the first water; in short all the knowing ones of the day.

"Parbleu!" cried our observer. "Rabelais was right indeed when he said, 'Paris is by rights the capital of gourmandizers.' I have no doubt that was true in the sixteenth century, but it is infinitely more so in the 19th." He was just concluding this reflection, when all at once there issued from the store a sweet and warm aroma of mingled game and fruit—floating like a breath of incense to his nostrils. Du Roseray was under the influence of that irresistible charm peculiar to culinary odors of which Grimod de la Reyniere has spoken.

"What if I take a peep at what is inside?" said he to himself. No sooner said than done—in he went. Nothing short of the analytic power Balzac has displayed in the first chapter of his "Peaute Chagrin" would suffice to describe what met Du Roseray's eye in this bazaar of gastronomy. All of nature's kingdom's were here arrayed, not symmetrically, but crowded together pell-mell in the midst of aromatic herbs or flowers growing in tree-like shapes.

"So I am entrapped, too, as well as every body else," thought Du Roseray. Once in the store, he was obliged to buy something; for that was expected of him. But what was he to buy? Leading the free and easy life of most bachelors, he had not what is called a furnished house. Du Roseray took his meals now at such and such a café, now at a first class restaurant, as the fancy struck him.

"I will get out of the scrape by sending what I buy to a friend's," thought he.

He was hardly in before he began to waver. He saw a superb pike lying stranded on a block of ice, like a whale in the polar seas; but what! send a fish to any body! decidedly vulgar that. Strings of black grouse were shown him; but birds of that sort are not good in the heat of summer. He betook him again to his eye-glass.

"A basket of peaches!" cried he, "early fruit! that is just the sort of thing you may offer with a good grace to any body."

In very truth there they were—a dozen superb Malta peaches, beautifully colored with alternate gold and pink; only twenty minutes ago they had been brought in by the Marseilles coach.

"What is the price of this basket of peaches?" asked the idler, without taking his cigar out of his mouth.

"These are the only ones of the kind now in Paris," replied the shopkeeper.

"What do you ask for them?"

"Three hundred francs."

Du Roseray threw down fifteen louis on the counter.

"Where is the basket to be sent?" inquired the shopkeeper.

"To say truth, I had not thought of that yet," answered the dandy, talking to himself. Then, after a slight effort at consideration, he continued:—"Why this is a pretty difficulty I am in, upon my word! I wish you to put the peaches in a pretty basket, wrap each one in fresh vine leaves, and send the whole to Mlle. Mariette, of the Opera House. Here is my card; put it in the bottom of the basket."

"All right, sir."

Some minutes after, the door-bell rang at the house of the individual he had designated under the name of Mlle. Mariette, of the Opera House. This Mariette, whose real name, we beg leave, for propriety's sake, not to give, was one of the young "danseuses" in 1836, who, though at a respectful distance, took Taglioni and Fanny Elsler for their models. She was less applauded at the theatre than those two brilliant artists, but very much more petted by "the town." This advantage she owed to her youth, her beauty, and her very fair skin; for even at that time the plaintive cry, "Blondes are disappearing from the land," had begun to be heard. So Mlle. Mariette received my amount of attention from those who could not rest unless they had ever before their eyes the nearest possible approach to the pale, blonde Venus of the Greeks. As to the reception she gave to prose, verse, bouquets, and all the other forms the serpent of seduction is wont to assume to gain a pretty woman's ear—as to all this we are mute. It is enough for us to observe that Du Roseray was one of the little danseuse's circle of admirers.

Mlle. Mariette was in her private room, just about to practice a new step.

"Madame," said Brigitte, her waiting woman, a sort of Puss-in-boots at her beck and call, "here is a basket of peaches M. Du Roseray has sent you."

A basket of Malta peaches—peaches in July, when in all likelihood there were none at Baron Rothschild's and certainly none at the royal table—this was one of those delicate attentions a woman always appreciates, be she even an operadanseuse. "That Du Roseray is the most charming fellow in the world; he deserves to be forever just twenty years old," returned the sylph, not, however, without first casting a hasty glance at the basket. When the first burst of satisfaction was over, the pretty girl dropped her beautiful head upon her hand, and was lost in reflection: and here the reader must make up his mind to this remark, strange as it is—these stage-deities, often more petted than queens, always obeyed, always loaded with presents, these goddesses have to stoop pretty often to the realities of matter-of-fact life. It, like Danae, they find at every moment a shower of gold falling at their feet, they still spend more of this pretty yellow metal than a certain king with ass's ears would have made in a day: and that is saying a great deal.

Mlle. Mariette was one of those who have three times as much as they want in the way of mere luxuries and always take good care never to have the necessaries of life. During the whole year, you were elbowed in her antechamber by an interminable string of clamorous creditors. Whenever, for a wonder, her debts were paid, then began to spring up all sorts of notions, coquettish whims, longings after certain dresses, shawls, carriages, porcelain, new furniture, ruinous fancies—in short a perpetual strife between luxury and poverty in closest union. That morning Mariette had had a day-dream about a little gold bracelet which she had seen on the arm of one of her companions of the green-room—a pretty trinket, representing a lizard biting his tail.

"I shall have one like it, or die in the attempt," thought she.

So it was that, whilst turning the basket over in her hands, she could not help recurring to her obstinate little notion about the bracelet.

"This is certainly very kind in Du Roseray, I must say; but these peaches are worth their weight in gold, and it wouldn't take me ten minutes to eat them. Why didn't he think of the little bracelet first? But men now-a-days never think of any thing."

From that moment an odd and temptingly logical thought took possession of her brain:—suppose I sell the basket of peaches and buy the gold lizard I want so much. The reader must not cry out against the improbability of our story; every day, in certain trafficking parts of Paris, stranger incidents than this occur.

Mariette rang, and Brigitte, the waiting woman, soon showed her sharp, cunning phiz.

"Pay attention, Brigitte," said her mistress to her. "You are a girl of tact, have a good head, and are just the person to understand and help me too well; my affairs are in precisely such a critical position that I must leave no stone unturned. You must get a hack and take this basket of peaches Du Roseray sent—you see the hack will hide the peaches. Don't give yourself any concern, but carry it to a fashionable market-store: be as quick as lightning, too, you hear. Take whatever the man will give you for it, and don't get into any trouble on the way. You shall have something pretty when you come back."

Brigitte's obedience was of the heroic order—she went without a word.

Chance delights in complication, and ordained on this occasion that the waiting woman should stop at the very store the peaches had come from.

"Whose business do you come on?" asked the store-keeper, with a slight ironical smile.

Brigitte muttered out her mistress' name.

"These Malta peaches are not worth any great amount now," returned the shopman. "Hundreds just like them are coming in every evening. What do you ask for them?"

"What will you give?"

"Two hundred and fifty francs."

"Be quick then?"

Whilst this scene was going on in the Boulevard, a different one was about to be enacted in Mariette's boudoir. A visitor had been there for five minutes.

"Ah! you here at last, Ernest? I haven't seen you for an age."

This individual was no other than little Ernest d'Urty; to make a nobleman out of himself he had followed the fashion of our new aristocratic manners and indulged in an apostrophe between the first two letters of his name. Young, rich, handsome, well enough versed in literature, he had been fashioned like one of those little butterflies of diplomacy who are first mock-secretaries, then attachés, and afterwards, to the astonishment of all Europe, wake up some fine morning ambassadors or ministers.

Mariette's heart was certainly not very vulnerable, but she felt a little more tenderness for this sprig of the Boulevard des Capucines than for any of the numerous admirers who followed her from the theatre home and from home to the theatre. He was *the* friend above all others, the person she looked to for bouquets—in short, what the Italians call the *patito.*

As soon as he had disposed of his hat and cane, he very naturally began to talk about the little scandals of the day—a topic idlers are obliged to resort to. But Mariette replied very carelessly; unlike her usual self, she drawled out her words, and was embarrassed, nay, even sad in her conversation.

Something extraordinary is going on, thought the future ambassador. And then he broke out aloud:

"What is the matter with you, my pretty child, this morning?"

"Nothing at all, a little headache, a feeling of ennui. Don't talk about that."

Earnest appeared to be all obedience to this injunction. For five minutes longer he let the conversation drag over the thousand and one objects that make up the daily history of the fortunate mortals of earth; and finally pretending that he had to settle some business, went away—not however without taking a little yellow Japan-rose from his button hole and dropping it at the feet of the young woman.

"Upon my word that is strange," murmured Mariette, as she glanced at the clock; "Brigitte hasn't come back yet."

It was not long before Brigitte *did* come back. She soon made her appearance with a beaming face.

"How much did you get for the basket?" asked her mistress.

Brigitte showed her the sum.

"Two hundred and fifty francs?" returned the danseuse, talking like an angry parrot; "that isn't half what I ought to have got; I had better have kept my peaches."

Nevertheless she recollected her promise, and put a louis into the waiting-woman's hand.

II

Brigitte was about to leave the room.

"Now I think of it, ma'am," said she; "You can't guess whom I saw prying about the basket of peaches and bargaining for it to as I was coming out of the store."

"A pretty question, to be sure! how do you think I can guess? Who was it?"

"M. Ernest d'Urty, the attaché."

"What! you say he was asking the price of the peaches?"

"Better still—he was buying them; I heard him say to the storekeeper: 'well I will take the basket. Don't change it at all, it looks very well just as it is. Simply add a bouquet of violets.'"

"Ah!" thought Marriette in a pet, "that is the reason why he only stayed five minutes—a thing I never knew him to do before. He was buying a basket, early fruit, a bouquet, a present, was he? and for whom should he buy all this if not for another woman?"

She was bewailing this fact and hurling short sentences, interrupted by sighs, about the heads of her statuettes, when Brigitte re-appeared and burst into a loud laugh.

"What is the matter now?" asked the danseuse.

"This time the adventure is too droll?" She showed her a bundle.

"M. Ernest d'Urty has bought the very peaches I carried just now to the store, and sent them to you by a porter. Isn't that as droll as droll could be?"

"Hush! Leave the basket here," said the danseuse as she dismissed the girl by gesture.

It was really the same basket Du Roseray had sent that very morning. No change visible—except the bouquet of violets decently inserted by a delicate hand.

"Well, I was mistaken," thought the sylph, "Ernest is really a good fellow. After all, whom could he have sent this present to but me? These are certainly very fine peaches; nothing in the world shall keep me from gratifying my fancy for them this time."

Mariette continued to practise her step—a sort of half mechanical, half mental exercise, in which a clown's suppleness had to be combined with the correct attitudes of sculpture. "Athenians, how many perils must I brave to please you?" said Alexander the Great, in Asia, when he was about to swim across a river. A danseuse who aims to please Paris has to encounter quite as many dangers as the Macedonian king; a single step costs almost as much care as the subjugation of a province.

"This abominable step!" said Mariette, "it is just like German music; I don't understand it till it is repeated a hundred times."

Just as she finished these words, the door opened again, but this time to give entrance to a personage who now appeared for the first time on tint day.

The reader must picture to himself an old and almost obese woman, wearing on her shoulders a heavy red plaid shawl and holding in her hand a little silver box, whence, from time to time, she took large pinches of snuff. The new-comer did not walk; you would have said she rolled along. With a revolution she dropped rather than sat down on a little sofa.

"Good morning, daughter," said the old woman, quite out of breath.

Sure enough this was the mother of the danseuse—a real actress-mother, just as importunate and avaricious as the whole set of them.

Meanwhile she did not loose her hold on a tapestry basket she carried on her arm—a pretty basket it was too, but it had an enormous mouth that was always wide open, and we may add, it never went out of the danseuse's house without being filled to the brim with everything imaginable down to the ends of candles, and the very leavings from yesterday's meals.

Truth to tell, she was a regular old ogress, and knew very well how to find out not sound game, but whatever could gratify her avarice. With such a scent as her's, it did not take long to discover the peaches.

"What is this little round affair, daughter?" inquired she of Mariette.

"It is a present from Ernest," replied the danseuse, "a basket of Malta peaches."

"The mischief! Malta peaches before July is out! Early fruit! These Attachés play a bold game." Whereupon she made an effort to get up, and propelled herself pretty well towards the table where the basket lay.

"Well, that is handsomely done. What do you think of doing with them?"

"Doing with them? Why what everybody does with peaches; I am going to eat them."

"Eat them! Peaches that cost at least a hundred crowns! If I were you, I would do very differently; catch your mother eating these peaches! Why, I never heard of such a thing!"

"But, mother, Ernest sent me them to eat."

"Foolish little chit! there are a hundred ways of showing a proper appreciation of the present. Come, have your wits a little about you and you will see."

Here the old woman ran her fingers into her box, and nose presently enjoyed a good pinch of snuff.

"My daughter," said she, "you know M. Lancret, the distinguished lawyer, (it was in fact one of the most notable men at the bar that she mentioned.) Now this gouty man has troubled himself these ten years with our interests, and never asked for the first cent of fee; he is the man who has prosecuted our lawsuit so pertinaciously—that endless affair of ours about the St. Domingo indemnity, which, one of these days, will make our fortune, or at any rate put bread and meat on the shelf for our old age. M. Lancret never asks you to pay anything from us but smiles and compliments. Don't you thing this occasion puts it in our power to show our gratitude for what he has done for us?"

"But" returned Mariette gently, "I think it would be indelicate to give Ernest's present to anybody."

"Earnest or anybody else, that is enough of high-sounding talk; that is what makes women on the stage come at last to die on a straw bed. Listen to what your mother tells you. Take a pen and write three lines with your very best spelling, and send the basket to M. Lancret; that will flatter the man more than a bag of gold, though he is very fond of money."

Mariette saw that she would have to yield in the end, and so determined to obey. She rang with a feverish hand.

"Brigitte! pen, ink and paper."

"Don't trouble yourself about choice of words; I will dictate the note to you."

"*My Dear Sir,*—

"Little presents keep alive talent as well as friendship. I send you, without any sort of ceremony, a basket of peaches, which I hope you will be good enough to accept.

"I am your's, etc.,

"MARIETTE,

"*Of the Royal Academy of Music.*"

The missive was folded in lozengeshape and thrown into the basket.

"Stop a moment!" cried the danseuse. "The peaches may go, but the bouquet shall stay with me."

No sooner said than done—she ran and put the flowers in a little China vase which stood on an étagère.

Twenty minutes after Brigitte was ringing the door-bell at the lawyer's.

"Something for M. Lancret from Mille. Mariette," said she.

The lawyer was just about to go to the courthouse.

"These stage-characters always have some charming idea or other," he muttered. "A basket of peaches; what a delicate attention! Unfortunately I can't enjoy them. I have to leave home this evening, after court, to go and defend a country client. What must I do with the basket? Stop, I have it."

He had just fixed his choice upon Count * * * * Peer of France, a large land-owner and his own neighbor in the country

"We have been negotiating a whole year," he added, "about a bit of land adjoining my domain which he asks too much for. The old fox asks six thousand france more than the thing is worth; nothing will make him give it up. Now I am sure he will be more accommodating after he gets this basket of peaches. But what shall I write to him? Ah! Pardieu! there is no use in my worrying my head about that. All I have to do is to make a slight alteration in the litte danseuse's model." So he wrote:

"*My Dear Neighbor,*—

"Little presents keep alive the relations of good neighbors as well as friendship. I send you, without any sort of ceremony, a basket of peaches, which I hope you will be good enough to accept.

"I am your's, etc.,

LANCRET."

Now it is the Peer's turn to go into ecstasy over the fine Malta fruit.

"Lawyers have been slandered," said he; "I think after all they are not such boors as people make them out. Now there is my country neighbor, a very cunning fellow, to be sure; well! he has sent me fruit worth almost as much as the golden apples in the garden of the Hesperides; that is a delicate attention I shall not forget."

Meanwhile in walks a servant, preceding according to Brittany fashion, a little cousin of the Count's, a protégé of his, M. Ernest d'Urty, the Attaché. The young man had come to thank the Peer of France for his interest with the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The compliment passed, Ernest casts a glance on the ebony table and sees nothing less than the present he has made that morning.

"Yes, I thought he, "that is certainly my basket, these are my peaches! How did they come from Mariette's to this place? I must find out the key to the mystery."

Visits of this kind are never long. Ernest makes his excuses, bids good day and is off.

"I will go and see Mariette," said he to himself as he came down the steps, "and reproach her as she deserves."

Meanwhile the Count hasn't taken his eyes off the peaches.

"It is provoking," he began, "that I am so out of sorts. I have gastritis complicated by any amount of dyspeptic disorders. The doctor forbids my eating anything whatever that is not cooked. So I needn't think about eating these peaches. But what shall I do with them? Ah! Pardieu! Suppose I were to try a touch of impertinence, and send them to the Duke of * * * my colleague in the upper-house?—Didn't he undertake to mortify me last week by helping me to the wing of a pheasant cooked in a turkey stuffed with truffles? No; he would gulp down my peaches and then laugh at me besides. I can do something better than that with them. Let me see—yes, upon my word! Last week I felt a little badly; I couldn't digest my dinner well. Some chance takes me to the opera while the ballet is going on; I see little Marriette dance; presto, quick! I am in good spirits and almost young again. From that instant digeston goes on well; I hum an air as I go out of the theatre, sleep like a log and am perfectly well again the next morning. Now I owe this comfort to pretty Marriette, and she is the one I ought to thank for it. I will write to her."

Now the Count had an aversion to anything like work, and so he too could think of nothing better than to arrange the lawyer's note to suit the case.

"*Mademoiselle,*—

"Little presents keep alive talent as well as friendship. I send you, without any sort of ceremony, a basket of peaches, which I hope you will be good enough to accept. "COUNT . . . "I am your's, etc.,

"Peer of France."

In the apartment of the little danseuse there was pouting and bickering, about the morning's present, between Ernest and Marriette. Enter Brigitte, nearly dead with laughter, with the everlasting baskst in her hand.

"Look at what Count * * * * has sent you, Ma'am," said she "it this basket isn't bewitched, my name is not Brigitte."

"Bewitched or not," said the dansense, "this time we shall keep it here. Ernest, hold out your hand; help me to eat these peaches."

The Malta peaches made a dessert for two days. As ill-luck would have it, Ernest d'Urty got the last peach in the basket, and found Du Roseray's card under it.

"What does this mean?" asked he. Then without waiting for an answer he continued: "When you wish to preserve an illusion, don't look too far beneath the surface."

From the Southern Planter for March.

WORK IN THE KITCHEN GARDEN.

Asparagras Beds should be forked this month. In the Planter last year, the process was described, and it is only necessary to add now, that the object of thus stirring the earth, is to break the crust formed during the winter, so as to give free ingress to air, light, and heat to the roots. After the beds have been thus worked, they should be dressed with old, well-rotted stable manure, to the depth of several inches, as a top-dressing.

Beets.—Sow in drills, about eighteen inches apart, and cover the seed in to the depth of two inches. The soil ought to be very generally the richest in the garden. It is a good plan to sow beets, carrots, [illegible] and onions, on the same bed, observing for each the directions given for sowing beets. Of course the seed should be put in separate drills, though in the same bed.

Celery.—Sow white, solid, celery this month, in very rich land, deep and friable; and, if possible, in a shady spot. When the land is not shaded, select that part which is least exposed to the action of the sun. Farmers who raise tobacco plants, would do well to sow this vegetable with their tobacco seed, in the beds which are made for the rearing of tobacco plants.—Such beds are always prepared with great care, especially to have them free of weeds and grass; and this is equally needful for celery, which is very small when first it appears above the earth.

Cabbage-seed may be put on warm borders this month, at least, the flat dutch, drum-head, and Savoy varieties. Cabbage plants in hot-beds, should have air freely now, when it is not too cold. On warm, sunny days, the sash should be raised and the air admitted freely, to harden the plants preparatory to their removal. By the fifteenth or twentieth of March, the plants may be set out in the garden.

Cucumbers, and *Melons* also, may be planted the last of March or first of April.

Kail.—Spring kail or as it is sometimes called rape seed. Sow a fall crop during the month of March.

Kidney Beans may be planted any time this month. Towards the last of the month, prepare the ground for Lima beans, and put down the poles for them. This should always be done before the beans are planted. After the poles are put down, plant the beans, and continue to plant until a good stand is secured, which is oftentimes a matter of great difficulty.

Lettuce, for the most part, is planted in the fall, but the variety known as "India Cape," a very beautiful and valuable variety,—sow now for summer use. This is the only variety of which I know, that stands the heat of summer well. The other varieties run to seed too quick. Lettuce is so highly esteemed among all classes, that there surely can be no need to urge its cultivation.

Melons, as already stated, may be planted the last of March or first of April.

Onions.—Sow the seed immediately, to raise a crop for pickling purposes. White Portugal is the best variety. This is also the season for planting the onion button or bulb.

Ochre.—Sow ochre the last of March or first of April; and, if desirous to economise space, it may be stuck in an out of the way corner, where you can put nothing else. It is chiefly valuable for soups, and by many persons is highly esteemed as a seasoning.

Parsley, sow broadcast, on borders or other convenient places as it will grow anywhere.

Peas.—Sow extra early, and other early varieties during March, and the first of April, sow Marrow fat. By sowing a new parcel every two or three weeks, the table may be constantly supplied throughout the whole season, whereas, if a full crop be put in at this time, there will be more than enough for consumption at one time, and then all the vines give out together.

Potatoes, for summer use, should be planted immediately. Those now are only for summer, and the seed which are to be planted later in the year, should be kept in a cool, dry place, to prevent sprouting. At a future period we shall have much to say concerning this crop.

Radishes are of several kinds. Sow turnip root variety at once; and later in the month, the long kinds. To have these good, a new crop must be sown every ten or twelve days, as they continue fit for use but a short time.

Spinage.—Sow immediately, in drills, separate from each other fifteen or eighteen inches. After covering the seed in the drill, trample them well, to promote speedy development.

In addition, the first of April, sow *Nasturtium,* for pickles and sauce, and in a small well-selected bed, in a warm, sunny part of the gardeu, put a few tomatoes and egg-plants.

HOOPS—*Important, if True.*—We coppy the following from the Baltimore *Clipper* of a recent date:

As a country gentleman was passing from a railroad station in this city to the house a friend, a lady stepped out of a door before him with large hoops in her dress. He was so much fascinated with their enormous size, that he followed after her, and passed his friend's house about two squares before he discovered it. He then turned about and retraced his way to his friend's dwelling, with his ideas considerably *enlarged* as to the size of hoops.

Original Poetry.

For the Planters' Advocate.

MACHINE POETRY--To Spring.

BY HELEN ST. CLYDE.

Welcome, sweet Spring! Thy buds and flowers,
Thy joyous songs and sunny hours!
How oft from Winter drear I've turned,
And for thy gentle beauty yearned!
How oft, 'mid snow, and hail, and rain,
I've longed for thee to come again;
And with thy blithe and happy bloom
To dissipate stern Winter's gloom!
And yet 'tis not for me to sing
Thy praises, joyous, sunny Spring!
To me there is a hallowing power
In April's changeful smile and shower,
And garlands of the bright May flower,
More deep than Poesy can reach—
Or what the rhyming poets teach:
And thou, dear Spring, hast not been slighted,
In lines by thousand scores indited—
By mongrel poets old and young
Thy beauties praised, thy virtues sung;
And when thy bloom begins to come,
Or first bright day appears,
A hundred rhymes, to suit the times,
Of common-place ideas,
Are ushered forth the tale to tell,
Which every body knows full well,
That Spring is pleasant, bright, and gay,
When chilling winds have passed away.
And then descant upon the posies,
The pinks, the violets, and roses,
That come with Spring and with it go;—
As those there were who did not know,
As much and more than some do,
How sweet it is to wander through
The "grand old woods" in flowering May,
And gather buds, and skip, and play,
As free as air, as gay as morn
When sunlight first begins to dawn.
Oh, yes! they read, and think they know,
And then they write to others so;
But who can tell what *real* Spring is,
From reading hackney melodies,
Unless they, too, can roam and roam
Through woody shade and forest lone,
Untrammeled by the cares of life
Which in the town are ever rife,
Blest by the pure, free air of heaven
Which to us country folks is given?
Spring is not Spring 'twixt city walls,
Where painted brick and stone enthralls
The ground where first her beauties show.
And, from the stunted trees that grow,
One ne'er would think, was Spring not seen
The forest with its springing green.
That trees or shrubs were ever made
To yield a pleasant, cooling shade.
They're pinched, alas! to such a strait
They never *could* grow *very* great.
Perhaps they, too, can thrive and live
By the stern precepts which men give
To train their fellows up by rule,
And learn them by the modern school
Of etiquette, to quench and crush
The buds of love, the flowers of truth
That ever will spontaneous gush
From the green branch of blooming youth.

Poor trees! they cannot thrive and grow,
As mortals do, and never show,
By outward form, how sad it is
To be confined by boundaries,
That narrow-hearted man has placed
To cripple nature to his taste.

And this brings home to every mind
A truth we everywhere shall find—
MAN *to be some must in mind be free:*
And even every flower and tree.
To yield their fragrance or their beauty give,
Must ope in *freedom,* and in *freedom live!*

OAK GROVE.

Selected Miscellany.

From Porter's Spirit of the Times.

Life in Washington.

WASHINGTON, D. C., March 11.

I came on here with rather a miscellaneous assortment of boys from the village, for the purpose of seeing the moral spectacle of the inauguration, and to receive some touching token of Mr. Buchanan's affection, in the shape of a comfortable salary. As to the former, I coincide in opinion with Hank Hose, that as a moral spectacle alone, it is lamented into fits by similar spectacles at the Bowery. I made a virtue of necessity (a small material to make it of) and remained an hour or two, jammed into a cylinder three inches in diameter, between a shoal of ladies, and all the reward my virtue received was a remark made by one of the ladies: "That brute has torn one of my flounces entirely off!"

Rotation, you know, is always sound Democratic doctrine—with the outs—the only question being with the ins, one of time. There are gentlemen here who have served the Government for twenty years and more. They subscribe to the doctrine; but they seem to think that a quarter of a century should elapse before a man is rotated; and then he should, of course, be rotated into a better place. I found seeing the spectacle much easier than getting my office, which, I mention to you in strict confidence, I have not got it yet, though my positive appointment has been especially telegraphed twice to the New York press.

You have been in Washington, of course?—Curious place, is it not? Very curious; perfectly *sui generis.* Seems to be considerable of it, but develish badly fenced in. The people are very hospitable: nearly everybody was apparently willing to take us in—some in one way, some in another—but chiefly in rooms and board.—The only draw-back on this noble hospitality was the small return they would consent to receive. A simple five was the highest figure taken for a cot, and there was scarcely a room with over ten cots in it; and I, myself, saw several that had a sheet and crib-blanket.

The hackmen are the institution, and they drew more upon my credulity and purse than any other class. I declare I fairly blushed, when comparing them, with their modest, conscientious, polite compeers in New York, for the inferiority of the latter. Here is an example:—Coming out of the National, I inquired of a squad of drivers how far it was to Brown's Hotel; no two could agree, varying from a mile and a half to three. At length a Milesian stepped up, and with some asperity, said to the crowd: "What the divil do you want to chate the gintleman, and he a stranger; you'll give us all a bad karacter. Your honor, it isn't a fut over a mile." Here, says I, is moral honesty and courage too, and I proceeded to negotiate. We started at an eagle, and diplomatized down to $2½. We started at a dashing rate, and I am satisfied that Patrick meant an Irish mile. After finishing my call, the following brief colloquy occurred with my friend:

Writer (loquiter.)—Come, old fellow, let's jump into a hack and ride over to the National; I'll stand the swindle.

Other Party.—Ride to the National? Do you happen to know the distance? The plea of ignorance (is that a legal plea?) was put in, and taking my friend's arm, we paced it, and found it precisely seventy yards.

The Government have a fine botanical, but no zoological garden. The deprivation of the latter is much felt, especially by strangers, but, as usual in this country, private enterprise and liberality is rapidly compensating for the niggardly spirit of Congress. Variety in the animals selected has been neglected, and for an unexplained, and to me inexplicable reason, all those who have so nobly invested their capital with an eye single to public amusement, have purchased only the feline species. But great pains must have been taken to tame them, for Col. Hickman—not, I believe, of the army—a very genial gentleman, who introduced himself to me, for which, by the way, in a very facetious manner, he asked a dollar, which he said he always charged—informed me that in the second story of nearly every house from the National to 3d street, you can buck the *tiger,* see the *pictures,* and get a feed. When you visit W., I will give you a letter to Col. H. He did not mention any other animals, but there must be others, for I heard some gentlemen say they had seen the elephant, and one, evidently a profane man, said he had "paid a cussed sight more for it than it was worth." I did not see any elephants, that I am aware of, probably because I did not go to the right place.

There is a very prevalent idea, and like very many other popular errors, it only needs to be mentioned to show its fallacy; it is, that the price of everything in Washington is at the apex. I am prepared, a mere 1-27 millionth of the people, to disprove all this. I have several times found articles here for which only a levy was charged, but I am bound in candor to state, that on tendering a quarter, the vendor is always out of change. Whiskey—whether plain or as brandy, rum and port wine—is only ten cents a drink; but here it takes fifteen cents to make ten, for you always get a dime from a quarter; but that is your fault, for they do take a dime. Restaurants, as all eating-houses are called here, are reasonable; I ate two small birds, nearly a mouthful each, coffee, (?) and some kiln-dried bread—I ordered toast—and it was only two dollars; now the sable director might precisely as well have charged five, for I only paid him a dollar, telling him I would recollect the player, and "whilst memory holds a seat in this distracted globe," meaning poetically my head, I intend to recollect it. And then the——; but really I am proving that a species of porcine animal, a bore—exists in Washington, and stop to assure you I am, truly yours, P. NUTTZ.

Duelling.

The late duel between Messrs. Nixon and Breckinridge, editors of New Orleans, furnishes additional evidence of

"How great the perils that environ
The man that meddles with cold iron,"

and has driven us to the determination of either avoiding or correcting the evil, or withdrawing from so dangerous a profession until we have made up our minds how to extricate ourself from any possible emergency. "If any man doubts this, let him put us to our purgation." Like Touchstone, we will be politic with our friends, smooth with our enemies, give the "*countercheck quarrelsome,*" to no man, but be sweet as summer to all around us—meaning to find no quarrel, even on the seventh cause.

As germain to the subject, reader, we recollect hearing from the late Chief Justice Marshall, that Governor Giles, of Virginia, once addressed a note of this tenor to Patrick Henry:

SIR: I understand that you have called me a "bob-tail" politician. I wish to know if it be true, and if true, your meaning? WM. B. GILES.

To which Mr. Henry replied in this wise:

SIR: I do not recollect having called you a bob-tail politician at any time, but think it probable I have.—Not recollecting the time or the occasion, I can say what I did mean; but if you will tell me what you think I meant, I will say whether you are correct or not. Very respectfully, PATRICK HENRY.

[*Wilmington Herald.*

Ex-President Pierce.

A Virginia gentleman, born in the county of Northumberland, from his high estimate of Ex-President Pierce, as a gentleman of the noblest bearing and exalted integrity, as was exhibited in his administration of the Government, according with the Federal Constitution—with no innovation on the reserved rights of the States, and after the strictest political doctrines of the Virginia resolutions of '98 and '99, published a proposition to the world first by a very near relative, in the Richmond *Examiner.*

This gentleman cordially invites the Ex-President to become a citizen of this good Old Dominion, where his eminent services in this widely extended Republic are appreciated.

He offers for his residence 200 acres of land, very near Elysium Springs, three miles from the border of Tenth Legion, five from Capon Springs. There he can have the benefit of that pure, balmy atmosphere, well impregnated with the purest Democracy. The name of the gentleman is withheld until it is necessary to be known. He will, also, give $1000 towards the purchase of any residence in the State of Virginia which the Ex-President may select.—*Richmond Enquirer.*

Anecdote of a Georgia Judge.

In 1853 there was tried in the ——Circuit of Georgia, a case of involuntary manslaughter. In the expressive language of a witness, the accussed, while drunk, pulled out his knife, and "slashing it about" struck the deceased in the abdomen. The attending physician being called to the stand, to make the usual proof of the nature and extent of the wound, testified, "that the knife entered the lower portion of the abdomen, penetrated the peritoneum, and thence extending through the omentum, to the vicinity of the iliac regions." The clerk, to whom all of this was Greek, inquired of the Solicitor-General if he desired that portion of the doctor's testimony taken down. The Solicitor, anticipating some fun, replied in the affirmative, and requested the doctor to repeat it slowly, which he did, in language, if possible, more incomprehensible. Old Judge A., losing his accustomed suavity of manner, impatiently exclaimed:

"Doctor, stop, for God's sake, stop; if the man was cut in the guts, say so; the clerk can put it down."

The doctor has since studiously avoided the use of technicalities in the presence of the uninitiated.

A Fremont Turkey at the White House.

If Fremont did not get to the White House, one of his gobblers is there and is treated with marked consideration—as witness the following, from the New York *Independent:*

A Fremont Turkey at Washington.—M. R. H. Avery, one of our early subscribers at Vampsville, Madison county, N. Y., has been a successful improver of the breed of turkeys by careful and judicious crossings, until his birds surpass all that have ever been known. Last fall he had a magnificent fellow, but two years old, of dark, changeable hue, whom he had brought up to the finest condition, so that he weighed thirty-four pounds alive, intending him as an inauguration gift to President Fremont. But as, to the great loss of the country, there was no President Fremont, the turkey was sold at a dollar per pound to an Orange county Democrat, who took him to Washington for the successful candidate, where his splendid appearance attracted great attention, and saved his neck from the knife, and he now displays his gigantic proportions in the grounds of the Presidential mansion.

PISTOLS!—The Manchester, New Hampshire, *Union* says:

"Mr. Burlingame spoke at Nashua last week. After he had duly registered his name at the Pearl street house, he drew from his pocket, ostentatiously, a finely mounted *revolver,* and placed it in the temporary keeping of the landlord, saying that as he had got among civilized people again, he should not probably need it!"

"Madam," said a doctor one day to the mother of a sweet healthy babe, "the ladies have deputed me to inquire what you do to have such a happy, uniform good child." The mother mused for a moment over the strangeness of the question and then replied, simply and beautifully: "Why, God has given me a healthy child and I LET IT ALONE."

A Case in Point for Young Men.

The Texas *Civilian,* in a notice of Hon. James S. GREEN, recently elected Senator from Missouri, has the following:

The son of extremely poor parents in Fauquier county, Virginia, he removed to Missouri about 1840, at the age of about 18. In 1842, he was employed as keeper of a village bar at $8 per month, his first entrance into town life. In that situation a lawyer in the village made his acquaintance, discovered his talent, and tendered him books and his own tutorage if he would study law. Green readily acceded, and read for a year behind the bar whenever the demand for drinks showed him time. Within two years from that time he had taught a country school, attended a grammar-school himself, receiving license as a lawyer. He then represented his county in the Democratic State Convention of 1843-4, and there made his debut as a politician in a speech of astonishing beauty, elegance, and power. His fame as a prodigy was carried to the extremes of the State by the returning delegates, and he was placed on the electoral ticket for Polk and Dallas. It was in that canvass that we first saw him. He was traveling and debating with the most eloquent Whigs of the State. Before a mixed crowd of two thousand people where his antagonist had tremendous prestige, Green rose triumphantly above him, broke the magic spell of his fame, and carried off the banner. As he descended from the stand, the ladies threw bouquets at his feet, and the audience shook the building with shouts of rapturous applause. He was sent to Congress in 1846-'48-'50, and by Mr. Pierce appointed Minister to New Granada. His health rendered his stay short. Last year he was again elected to Congress, but now, before taking his seat, he is elevated to the Senate.

A Pleasing Incident.

A pleas