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SELECTED TALES.

From the New York Sunday Mercury.

Aleck Foster's First Love Scrape.

BY ABEL REDTOP.

Aleck Foster was born and brought up in a small shanty of a house, close by the Coalhill school-house on the Schoodonk creek, and a merry, lazy bringing up he had of it. Till he was twenty-one years of age, the school-house and the creek shared his time equally. His father, who was an always-busy blacksmith, inquired regularly twice every day, for Aleck, and if answer was, at the school-house or the creek fishing, the old man was satisfied that he was so well employed, and whistled away at his forge as easy, and as contented as any blacksmith in the whole country round. He was an industrious boy, in his father's opinion, and would never come to want. "Aleck, my boy," said he, the day that Aleck arrived at his majority, "to-day you're a man—you've always been a good, industrious boy—you've got two suits of clothes and a good dog, now there's seven silver dollars—say good bye to your mother, and clear out to seek your fortin." In an hour's time Aleck equipped in his best, his t'other tied up in a cotton handkerchief and slung over his shoulder on a stout walking stick, called his dog and started off down the road, but soon the old man hailed him, and wanted to know where he was going.

"To seek my fortin,—didn't you tell me to?"

"Sartin, but I didn't tell you to go off without saying a word to me."

"No, not exactly, but you told me to clear out, and I'm going to do it."

"Well, now, mind your eye, look out sharp for the main chance, and your fortin is made. Remember that advice, and honor your father and mother.—I've got nothing more to say, Aleck—good bye, and be careful of the pewter."

Aleck wished the old man a happy time and was off directly with light heels, as if he did not mean that grass should grow under his feet, till he was out of that neighborhood. All the knowledge Aleck had of the world, he had picked up at home—he had never been more than three miles from the old school-house where his young idea had been taught to shoot—paper wads. His life had been all sunshine, and when he started off, a man, to seek his fortin, 'twas the happiest day of his existence. He trudged along all day, whistling and singing, alike regardless of his course or where it might lead him—as happy as if he were still fishing in Schoodonk creek, or storing up useful knowledge at Coalhill corner—somewhere along the road, just after night had closed in, he was lost sight of.—About 9 o'clock of the same evening, a love scene was being enacted at the Widow White's house, just a little down the road from a locality known as Slab city. It was a comfortable looking farm house, painted white, with green blinds—stood in a little from the road, and all about looked a picture of neatness and well-to-do in the world. The persons engaged in it were Widow White herself and farmer Gibson, a hearty looking old fellow of fifty years the widow about thirty-eight, but looked as fresh and buxom as if not more than thirty. The farmer was on his knees before the widow, her hand clasped in his, and rolling up his eyes as imploringly as a dying calf—probably had been doing an extensive talk in love matters—this much certain, "Widow, you know I love you."

"Farmer, how much do you love me?"

"I love you more than I can tell—I love you like the—the devil."

"The devil you do!" said a strange voice at the window—the farmer sprang to his feet, pulled his hat over his eyes and shot out the doorway as quickly as if he had been propelled by electro lightning. A moment more and the stranger entered the room—"Good evening, ma'am," said he, with a low bow and swing-up of the dexter foot—"good evening, ma'am, I seed the window open and so I looked in—the door is open, so I come in to see if you could keep me and my dog to-night, we're looking after a place to sleep. I'm considerable tired myself, and I reckon the dog is, he tree'd five squirrels to day and chased all the cows besides—I reckon that was a funny old chap down there on his knees,—he went out a streak. I reckon you don't know me? *no*, don't you though? you know the dog don't you? *no*, you don't know the pesky critter; why he runs away every day, and I kinder thought he might come down here to see your dog, perhaps you haint got any? you don't like to have that old fellow sparking round you? just say the word, and I'll lick him straight into the rudiments of 'rithmetic—you didn't say whether we could stay all night—the dog can sleep in the shed, and I can sleep on the floor just where you say—*feel talkative?* Yes, I feel purty slick, I'm out of my time to-day, and now I have started off to seek my fortin. I've got seven dollars—I calculate that will pay all my expenses. *What's my name?* Oh, yes, my name is Aleck Foster, son of blacksmith Foster on my father's side and of Mary Foster on my mother's side, once Mary Jones, joined in the holy bonds of wedlock by Squire Chase, so says the great bible; had all the rudiments of larning thrashed into me by Master Cowan; know every good fish-hole in Schoodonk creek, and want a place to sleep to night. *Where am I going to-morrow?* Wal, I reckon I don't know; I guess I'll go down the road till something turns up, don't mind where I go—fortin is the main chance, and I don't calculate to miss it. *Can stay here all night?* Wal, that is clever and comfortable; if you've got any chores to do, I'll do 'em as a sort of pay. You haint got a cold bite of something, have you? I feel kinder lank, and I guess the dog does too. Cold beans and pudding—anything that will suit the dog is just as good for me; if I can't pay you doing chores, I let the dog stay here to-morrow to chase the neighbors' cows out of your corn-field. *You guess you can find something?* Wal, that's nat'ral; give us a whole biling lot of it, I'm about as hungry as if I had been fishing all day without any grub."

While the widow was down the cellar hunting up something for Aleck to eat, he was doing a talk all alone by himself. "I swan to almighty smash," said he, "she's a widow, and a slick one, and she wants to be sparked up to. I'll set my cap for her, as the girls say, and cut old cut-and-run right straight out. I'll make love to her, by Judas, and my fortin's made just as sure as pisen. She's a darn slick woman, and I'll bet two cents to a horse-bean that she's got a whole lot of cows."

Here the widow returned, loaded down with eatables, which she spread out on the tidy-looking kitchen table, to which Aleck needed no second invitation, and, between the dog and himself, it was cleared off in about the same space of time that it took her to spread it out. As he smacked his lips after swallowing the last morsel, he turned round and reckoned that he felt better.

"I am glad to hear it," said the widow.

"I make myself at home, and the dog too," said he.

"I am glad you do," was the response.

"Wal, I reckon I wouldn't mind if this was my home. Father told me to look out for the main chance, and I'm going to do it. I reckon you are my main chance, and I should like to court you by Judas—only say the word and I'll marry you in two hours."

"Marry me," said the widow in astonishment, "why I'm old enough to be your mother."

"Git out now, you aint half as old as my mother. My heart is all smashed to pieces, and I want you, by Judas I do."

"O, nonsense! what put that foolish notion in your head?"

"Notion? Fortin is the main chance, you're fortin, and I love you'—seizing the widow's hand, down on his knees he went in imitation of farmer Gibson, turned up his face with a yield-or-I'm-a-goner expression, and unable to think of anything else but his predecessor's speech, stammered out 'like the devil."

"Ahem!" said a gruff voice at the window—Aleck raised himself up, and stood face to face with farmer Gibson, whose chin rested on the window sill—the only part of his figure that was visible. The widow took it all very quietly, and busied herself clearing up the table.

"Hem! what do you mean by that, old cut-and-run?"

"Ahem!"

"Hem agin—if you were in here, I'd cram the hem down your teeth."

"Ahem! little boy."

"Hem! old boy—cock a-doodle-doo!" Aleck flapped his wings and crew again, at which his dog bristled up and howled lustily, as if the crowing was to him a declaration of war.

"That's right, boy, crow again; you look as much like a young rooster as anything. Ahem!"

"I reckon you'd like to feel my spurs," and Aleck danced up to the window sideways shook his fist in the farmer's face, then he'd stand off a little and throw his foot over his head, then he'd dance round again and flourish his legs and arms all round the room—a sort of war dance, his rival coolly surveying the performance, and when he came to a stand-still, he told Aleck that he was "just like a windmill with a sheep's head on it—all arms and all jaw"—whereupon Aleck got so wrathy that he could stand it no longer; he made a rush, and out the window he went, head first—old Gibson caught him round the neck on his passage out, brought him to the ground, and was going through the first manœuvres towards giving him a good thrashing, when out of the window came Aleck's dog in pursuit of his master, and, finding him in danger, fastened his teeth firmly in Gibson's leg, which caused him to release his hold in order to shake off his new antagonist. Aleck profited by the opportunity, rolled out from under him, sprang up and cleached in on more equal terms, and then they had it rough and tumble all round the widow's cucumber beds, tramping down the vines, tearing up the trellising to thrash each other with, the widow holding the light over her head out of the window, urging them on—first Aleck, then Gibson, then the dog—"go it, Aleck, bite 'em, dog—look out for my cucumber beds—hit him again, farmer, stuboy! bite 'em—look out for my monthly rosebush"—and between them all they kicked up a glorious rumpus for about five minutes or so, and only gave in when they all gave out. The farmer licked Aleck and the dog, the dog and Aleck licked the farmer, and the widow and dog licked the farmer and Aleck—with fighting and yelling they were all used up, strength and breath, and they rested—the farmer on the cucumber hill, Aleck on another, the dog behind a currant bush, and the widow stretched half way out the window trying to urge them to renew the fray, declaring that it was as good a dog fight as she had seen in many a day, and 'twas hard to tell which had the best end of it. The farmer was the first to move—having partly regained his breath, he streaked off out the gate and down the road—his trouserloon legs all torn to pieces by the dog's teeth, his coat split up the back to the collar, his hat smashed up into an all-sort of a shaped hat, and covered with dirt from head to foot—he was soon out of sight. Aleck fared worse—his best suit was entirely ruined, face brushed and scratched, tears and claret running down his frontispiece—poor Aleck, he had been in rough hands and got roughly handled; and when the widow coaxed him into the house, he sat down on the floor and bellowed like a ten year old boy with the bowel complaint. It was a long time before he could be prevailed upon to wash his face and go to bed; old Gibson had completely thrashed the starch out of his corporosity; he had never before been so nearly vanquished; and it operated upon him like the application of warm water to starched linen. At last he slept. When he appeared in the morning; he had donned his t'other suit—his lips and nose considerably enlarged, both eyes in mourning—his love for the widow had taken to itself wings; he said not a word on that subject, ate his breakfast in silence, and prepared to go. "Widow, I'm going home," said Aleck, as he shouldered his bundle; "here's seven silver dollars, I reckon that will pay you for your cucumber beds, the rest of the garden, all your trouble, and the rest of the fixens—good-bye." He laid the money on the table, called his dog, and put off for home with desperation in every look and motion.—He reached Coalhill Corner just at sun-down, related his adventures to the old people, who sympathized with him, advised with him, and bathed his wounds with goose grease. The next day found Aleck at work with his father at the forge, and there he continues, well convinced that bellows-blowing is the main chance and the surest way to fortin; and he says he means "tu stick right tu it."

MARYLAND LOAN.—Holders of sterling coupons due on the 1st of July 1842, will see by the advertisement that they can receive payment for the same at the Loan office in Baltimore, if immediate application is made.

POETRY.

MY OWN PET WIFE.

Bright is thy forehead, pure and high
As the warm love I bear thee;
And bright to me as the summer's sky
Is the dark radiancy of thine eye:
Bright is thy cheek, which ever glows
With the soft tints which deck the rose;
Bright is thy lip, whose crimson sweet
Still breathes of love, without deceit;
And bright thy chin, whose playful life
Endears me to "my own pet wife."
Bright is the smile which decks thy brow,
And teaches each loved friend to know
The welcome that he has to share
Our homely, yet not niggard fare;
And brighter still that smile becomes
Whene'er thy watchful care removes
The well bleached damask from the board
To place the wine, our choicest hoard,
For valued guest, our friend through life,
Is dining with "my own pet wife."
Sweet is thy converse, dear the tale
Wherewith you struggle to regale
Our cheerful mood, and help refine
The pleasure of my friend and wine;
But, if you join in song or glee,
Then doubly sweet is melody.
And oh, how deep, how sweet the thrill,
The sacred ecstacy I feel,
When thy pure song from earth set free,
Breathes homage to the Deity:
Then art thou dearer far than life,
More deeply loved, "my own pet wife."
Dear is the sound of tiny light tread,
Floating around me, as if bred
With fairy cadence to beat time
To music of a purer clime.
Dear is thy every look and tone
When morning draws me from my home,
And dearer far to me they seem,
When evening leads me back again:
Then is the storm and cloud of life
Made sunshine by "my own pet wife."

AGRICULTURAL ANECDOTE.—Furious Cresinus, as mentioned by Pliny the Roman historian, was originally a slave. Having been made a freedman, he purchased a small spot of ground, from which he obtained through his unwearied industry much finer crops than any of the neighbors who had larger farms.—This excited general envy, which his enemies carried to such a length as to accuse him of employing magic charms to render his own grounds fertile and impoverish theirs. The Edile caused him to be summoned to appear and answer the charge before the people of Rome. Cresinus obeyed the mandate, accompanied by his daughter, a fresh and healthy colored girl, charms which appeared to greater advantage from the simplicity of her dress. The accused also brought with him the tools and implements of his profession. His mattocks were remarkably ready; his plough was of an enormous size, and his cattle were all sound and fat.

"Behold!" said this truly dignified and indignant farmer, "behold my whole magical equipage! behold the charms which I have recourse to! There are others indeed which I am not capable of producing before you—I mean the sweat of my brow, and incessant toils both by day and night."

This native eloquence decided the matter, he was honorably acquitted by the unanimous voice of a numerous and applauding assembly.

SPEECH OF A MISSISSIPPI MILITIA GENERAL.—Fellow Soldiers! Elected from among you to be your Gin'ral, and being about to be a candidate before you agin, I thought I'd state to you, that I've found at last *what I was made for!* I was elected to the Legislater, but found I wouldn't do *thar*—they made me a Justis of the peace, but it did'nt suit me—and I've been Police Juror and Bridge Commissioner, but there was no field for me *thar*—but at last you made me Gin'ral and if thar is any thing I'm fitten for, its that; and if ever the British Lion goes to growlin on our shore, and the allied minions *investigates* our country, I'll be the *first* man to quit it! Hurra for Mississippi—McNute and—*Me!*—Roo pee, Hurra.

Dip the Mississippi dry with a teaspoon; twist your heel into the top of your boot; make postmasters perform their promises; send up fishing hooks with baloons and fish for stars; get astride a gossamer and chase a comet; when a rain storm is coming down like the cataract of Niagara, rememember where you left your umbrella; choke a mosquito with a brickbat; in short, prove all things hitherto considered impossible to be possible, but never attempt to coax a woman to say she will when she has made up her mind to say she won't.

DEFINITION OF MONEY.—What is money? D'ye give it up? It is *dew* in the morning and *mist* at night."

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE TARIFF.—It is cheering to hear from the South—where the suicidal policy of hostility to the tariff is so obstinately cherished—the expression of sentiments such as are here uttered by the New Orleans Bulletin:

"The intention is avowed by the leaders in a certain school of politicians to attempt at the next session of Congress the reduction of the revenue standard. Any such movement at the present time is much to be deprecated. The compromise act is working well: under its operation the country is prospering to an extent beyond the most sanguine anticipations. In such circumstances, why resort to dangerous experiments and doubtful innovations? Like the man in good health, who, wishes to be better, took medicine and died of it, our body politic might languish and perish under the physicking and doctoring to which it may be subjected by empirical and visionary politicians.

The Union reiterates that "one of the great objects of the republican, (a misprint for Loco-Foco) party, is the *reduction of the Tariff*." It repeats Mr. Walker's dogma, that "the tariff must be reduced to the revenue standard."—And it winds up the assertion that all considerations conspire "to recommend important reductions of the tariff." Very well. The post office reduction is going on—and the *quasi* war against Mexico has commenced. Fleets and Armies are in motion; steamboats and store-ships are sinking and snagging—volunteers are called out—and money is flowing like water. When Congress meets we shall know what the "revenue standard" will be—and how much the government will want *to pay expenses*. In the mean time, we commend the tariff *to those most interested*—to the Loco Focos in Pennsylvania and elsewhere. If they unite in its "reduction"—who will say nay? The matter is in their hands.—Let them work their will and pleasure. *Alexandria Gazette.*

A portion of the modern "democracy" of Massachusetts, denounce their old friend, Marcus Morton, now the Collector at Boston. The Boston Atlas says, "He—who has been their twenty years candidate for Governor—who attended all their Dorr Clambakes—He, whose whole life has been a series of sacrifices in the cause of "Democracy"—is he to be dropped and disregarded, at the moment the party is in the zenith of its power? Truly—not only are Republics ungrateful—but most peculiarly so are these modern "democrats," who claim to be the exclusive friends of Republican Government."

A PAINFUL SIGHT.—The Nantucket Inquirer, says: "To see young men lounging about month after month, neither working nor desiring to work, while others—perhaps their poor parents—are toiling from morning to night to save them from a disgrace which their own thoughtlessness and laziness is fast bringing upon them! But how many such sights are to be seen in every community. How many are found, who have not that sense of shame which is necessary to force them off the lounger's seat, but enough of that false pride which will not allow them to take hold of employment, if it does not happen to be genteel and profitable! Alas! the fate of such is sealed; they will go down to the grave unloved, but by their mothers; unmourned, but by their companions in idleness; and soon to be forgotten by all."

A NEW TOM THUMB.—General Tom Thumb has been cast in the shade by the Emperor Tom Thumb—his features are said to be *commanding* and expressive, and his figure well proportioned; his height two feet nine inches, his age sixteen years, and finally he attained his present stature when four years of age.

RELIGION AND LETTERS.—No people build school houses and churches together, who have not a high appreciation of both the intellectual and moral powers of man. There are some people and nations who build churches *without* school houses. In such lands, religion becomes superstition, and government becomes despotism.

EXPORTATION OF WOOL.—There have been shipments of wool to England lately to the extent of 100,000 lbs., and there are further orders in market. The reason of these shipments is, that wool can nowhere else be bought so cheap as in this country.

We learn that the Locofocos of McNulty's native town received him the other day with thirteen guns. Why not twenty? Wasn't it twenty thousand dollars that he stole?

BURR AND ANNEXATION.—There are those living who remember well the horror which the discovery of Aaron Burr's movements occasioned in our valley, and all over the country.

Doubtless much of this horror arose from the belief in the public mind that his aim was to sever the Union. Yet the better informed, particularly in this valley, knew, as they believed, that he sought simply to conquer Mexico. And were they less active in denouncing him—less decided in opposing all his schemes? Not at all. It was seen that they must end in grafting upon the public mind a war-spirit, foreign alike to the interest of the people and principles of government of the people.

That bold man sleeps. Not so the passions and lust which he sought to enkindle, on which he hoped to build up his power. In another form (whether under less injurious auspices time alone can determine,) and for similar if not identical ends, these passions and this lust have been again appealed to and successfully roused, and now the whole press of a strong party call it patriotism, a brave and noble love of country and of liberty, when battalions offer their services to meet a weak foe in deadly strife. Recall the day when Burr loomed up a mighty man in the nation. Recall the hour when he fell. It was, in the nation's history, but as *yesterday*, and yet this same people now are for conquest—for war having conquest in view.

A wonderful change this! Yet it shows how easily a whole people may be swayed—how their purposes, principles, and spirit may be recast, and how, with the best intentions, and under the best government in the world, a downward path may be trod by them, even amid hurras for liberty, and insolent boasts of extending the area of human freedom.—*Cincinnati Gazette.*

REMARKABLE METEOR.—On Monday morning last, about half-past two o'clock, there was a terrific meteoric explosion near this place. Accounts vary about the brilliancy of the light, but the explosion is agreed on all hands to have been the most startling ever known in this vicinity. It resembled the sudden discharge of a park of artillery, and shook the houses even to such a degree as at first to produce the impression that it was the shock of an earthquake. The reverberation of the echo continued several minutes, and the effect was majestic beyond description.—*Fayetteville (N. C.) Observer.*

[This same remarkable meteor was observed here, and was mentioned by us in last Tuesday's paper. Those who saw it here, thought its explosion was followed by a noise—but, of course, nothing like that heard in North Carolina. *Alexandria Gazette.*

FATHER MILLER has published an address or apology in relation to his doctrines concerning the end of the world. He admits his mistake as to the time, but says that he was actuated by pure motives also that, since he was wrong as to time, he can only live in continued expectation of the event. He concludes with this sentence: "For my indiscretions and errors, I ask pardon; and all who have spoken evil of me without cause, I freely forgive. My labors are principally ended. I shall leave to my younger bretheren the task of contending for the truth. Many years I toiled alone; God has now raised up those who will fill my place. I will not cease to pray for the spread of the truth."

FREE NEGROES OF KENTUCKY.—We regret to learn from the Lexington Observer of last week, that the injudicious course of Cassius M. Clay's advisers, has resulted in a movement for the ejectment of free blacks from Fayette county. The citizens have had a public meeting and resolved that they must leave the county. All who wish to go to Liberia shall have a free passage and provisions for the voyage.

SHOCKING DESTITUTION.—It has been recently ascertained in England that the inmates of some of their workhouses, employed in crushing the bones of horses and other animals, have been in the habit of eating the gristle found upon them to satisfy their hunger.

A LOAFER'S ACCOUNT OF THE MARKETS.—Boots is scarce—hats is dear—pants is in demand—shirts is none on hand—dickies is dirty—coats is nowhere—stocks is low—weather is midlin—Juleps is cold—cobblers is good—toddies is up—and cash is down. No sales of any consequence in consequence of there being none on hand.

NEW YORK CITY.—The whigs of New York city, have nominated Morris Franklin, Esq., as their candidate for Mayor, at the ensuing election.

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