

The Stephens City Star.

HERE SHALL THE PRESS THE PEOPLE'S RIGHTS MAINTAIN, UNAWED BY INFLUENCE AND UNBRIBED BY GAIN.

By BEN. S. GILMORE.

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An Autumn Scene.

The Indian summer's veil of blue,
Lies on the mountain fairs far away;
And, from the east, for ever new,
Dawn ushers in the dreamy day.

The air is still, the rivulet gleams
In silver flashes through the vale—
The silken mist above the stream's
Fair path shines like a glistening sail.

I see the squirrel skip and dart
Among the rainbow-tinted leaves,
The glossy chestnuts fire his heart—
But, as for him, he never grieves.

Where red and russet orchards stand,
Bowing their burdens to the plain,
The lover takes his loved one's hand
And saunters through the orchard lane.

The clouds are soft that flick the sky,
The dry leaves rustle past their feet;
But their unclouded reverie,
And blissful dreams and visions sweet,

Onto the splendor of the day,
Surpass the glory of the dawn;
The world itself must pass away
Ere such delights are dead and gone!

I mark their measured step and slow,
The cottage gate, the parting kiss,
And think no summers vainly go
That end in such triumphant bliss!

AN EASTERN JUGGLER.

While traveling through India, between Surat and Nagpore, my body servant one day informed me that a great juggler and snake charmer wished to have the honor of showing me something of his skill.

"What can he do?" I asked my servant.

"Almost everything that is marvelous, I've been told," was the answer I received.

"Admit him."

My servant withdrew and presently returned with a small, withered old man, about whom I saw nothing remarkable except the eyes, which were small, black and piercing, and seemed to have lightning imprisoned in them. I do not know whether the man could see in the dark like a cat, but there was at times that peculiar fiery appearance of the balls which is so often observable in night prowling animals.

He wore a white vest, Turkish trousers, a kind of crimson petticoat worked with strange devices, a turban of many colors and red morocco shoes, pointed and turned up at the toes. His arms and neck were bare, and with the exception of a couple of heavy gold rings in his ears, he displayed no extraneous ornaments. His age I judged to be sixty, and his short mustache was almost white. He made a low salaam, and then appeared to wait to be addressed.

"Your name?" said I, in Hindoostanee.

"Paunjar, your excellency."

"I am told you wish to show me some wonders?"

"If your excellency wills."

"Well, what can you do?"

He suddenly produced—from where I did not see and cannot tell—a large ball of twine, which he appeared to toss into my lap, keeping hold of one end, so that it unrolled the whole distance between him and me—at least ten feet, saying as he did so:

"Will your excellency please examine what you see?"

Now, I honestly aver that I saw that ball of twine when he threw it as plainly as I ever saw anything in my life—saw it come toward me, saw it unroll and apparently drop into my lap, so that I brought my knees quickly together to catch it, and yet when I put my hand down to take it and looked down for it, it was not there—nothing was there, and, at the same instant, I perceived the juggler balancing it on the end of his finger.

"Pshaw!" said I; you deceived me by making me believe you threw it toward me."

"Does your excellency think I have it?" he asked.

And, before I could answer I saw, in place of the ball, a beautiful, large rose, which he was balancing by the stem—and yet he had not altered his position in the least, and scarcely stirred a finger.

I began to be astonished.

While yet I looked I saw in his right hand a cup, and in his left the rose. He stepped forward a few feet, laid the rose down on the ground, and placed the cup over it.

Here, it will be observed, there was no machinery to assist him—no table with its false top, concealed compartments and confederate, perhaps, to effect a change as we see similar tricks performed in a place fitted by a magician for the purpose—but only my own quarters, in the full bright light of day, with myself closely watching every movement within five feet of him, and

my attendants grouped around almost as near.

Having covered the rose with the cup, as I would be willing to make oath, for I saw the rose distinctly at the hollow vessel, held by the top, went slowly down over it, the conjurer resumed his former place, and said:

"Will your excellency be kind enough to lift the cup and see what is under it?"

Of course I would have wagered a heavy sum that the rose was still there for one thing, because expecting some trick, I had kept my eye on it to the last moment, and was certain there was no possibility of its being removed after the hand had let go of the cup at the top.

I complied with the request, stepped forward, and raised the cup; but instantly dropped it, and bounded back with a cry of terror—for there, instead of the rose, was one of the little, green, deadly serpents of India, coiled up and ready for a spring, with its small, glistening eyes fixed intently on mine. Snakes of any kind are my horror; and this one not only horrified me, but all my attendants, who, with cries of alarm, enlarged the circle very rapidly, for they knew its bite to be fatal.

"No more such tricks as these, conjurer!" said I, sternly.

"It is perfectly harmless, your excellency," grinned the old man, walking up to it, lifting it by the neck, putting its head into his mouth, and allowing it to run down his throat.

I shuddered, and half-believed the juggler possessed of a devil, if not a devil himself.

He next produced a tube that looked like brass, about two feet long and half an inch in diameter, and next, the ball of twine again.

Where these things came from, or went to, I could not tell. They seemed to be in his hands when he wanted them; but I never observed his hands passing near his dress, either when they appeared or disappeared. When I looked for the cup that I had lifted from the snake, it was gone; and yet neither myself nor any of my attendants had seen this wonderful man pick it up! It was indeed jugglery, if not magic, of the most unquestionable kind!

Through the brass tube the conjurer now passed one end of the twine, which he put between his teeth. He then placed the tube between his lips, threw back his head, and held it perpendicularly, with the ball of twine on the upper end. Then suddenly this ball began to turn, and turn rapidly, and gradually grow smaller, till it entirely disappeared, as if the twine had been run off on a reel. What turned it, or where it went to, no one could see. The juggler then set the other end up, and a new ball began to form on the top, but apparently ribbon, of half an inch in width, and of different colors. These rolled up, as if on a bobbin, till it formed a wheel of two or three inches in diameter, when the performer seemed to toss ribbon and the tube over his shoulder, and that was the last I saw of either.

He next produced what appeared to be the same cup I had lifted from the snake, showing something that looked like an egg, advanced the same as before, and placed the latter on the ground and the former over it, and again requested me to raise it, which I declined to do, fearing I should see another serpent, or something equally horrifying.

"Will any one lift the cup?" he said, turning to the others.

No one volunteered to do so, but all rather drew back.

At this he took up the cup himself and appeared to throw it into the air, and there sat in its place a beautiful dove, which flew up and alighted on his shoulder. He took it in his hand, muttered over some unintelligible words, seemed to cram it into his mouth, and that was the last I saw of that also.

He performed some other tricks similar to these, and concluded with the mysterious bag. This bag—which somehow came into his hands, as did all the other things he used, in a manner unknown to us—was from two to three feet long, and about a foot wide. It looked as if it had been used to hold some kind of flour; and I certainly saw something like the dust of flour fly from it when he turned it inside out and beat it across his hands. He turned it back again, and tied it to the mouth with a string, muttering a low incantation.

This done, he threw it on the ground and stamped on it, treading it all out flat with his feet. He then stepped back a few paces and requested us all to fix our eyes on it. We did so; and after the lapse of perhaps thirty seconds, we

saw it begin to swell up, like a bladder when being expanded with wind. It continued to swell till every part became distended, and it appeared as round and solid as if filled with sand. Its solidity, however, was only apparent—for when the juggler went up and placed his foot on it, it yielded to the pressure, but immediately sprung back, or rounded out, as soon as that was removed. He then jumped on it with both feet, and flattened it all out at first. He then went away again; and the bag being left to itself as before, again began to rise, or inflate, but this time as if some animal like a cat were inside of it. In fact, I could see where there appeared to be legs; and then to my utter amazement, I may almost say horror, it began to move toward me, as if impelled by the unknown something in it!

I do not think I am a coward—my worst enemy has never accused me of being one, at least—but I confess that on this occasion my nerves would not let me remain passive; and I retreated from the advancing mystery, and informed the magician that I had seen enough to satisfy me of his wonderful occult powers. At this he smiled grimly walked up to the bag, trod it down again, picked it up and beat it with his right hand across his left, caused it to unaccountably disappear from my sight and then made his concluding salaam.

How these wonders were performed—by what art, power, or magic—I do not and never expect to know. I have conversed with many persons who have seen quite as strange unnatural things, but never heard any one give any explanation that I considered at all satisfactory.

"If your excellency wills, I shall now have the honor of showing you how I charm serpents," said the necromancer.

I had heard something of this singular power, and was desirous of seeing it displayed. Accordingly myself and attendants all repaired to an open field, at no great distance, where, after some search, Paunjar discovered a hole, in which he said he doubted not there was a snake.

"But before I call him forth," he proceeded, "I must be assured that some one of sufficient courage will stand ready to cut him down when I give the signal—otherwise, should he prove to be a cobra capella, my life may be sacrificed."

"I will myself undertake the business," said I, drawing my sword.

The man hesitated, evidently fearing to insult me by a doubt, and yet not eager to risk his life on the strength of my nerves, after the display of timidity had already made. I thought I read all this in the man's face, and I said, very positively,—

"Never fear, good sir! I will cut down whatever you bring up this time, be it snake or devil!"

"My life is at your excellency's mercy," bowed the man with a show of humility. "Remember the signal! When I raise my hand above my head, may the blow be swift, sure, and deadly!"

He then gave his whole attention to the business before him. Putting an instrument, not unlike a flageolet, to his lips, he began to play a shrill, monotonous, disagreeable sort of a tune keeping his eyes riveted upon the hole in the ground; and soon after, to my utter astonishment, though I had been prepared for anything, I saw the ugly head of the hooded snake, the dread cobra capella, the most poisonous of all deadly reptiles, come slowly forth, with its spectacled eyes fixed steadily upon the strange musician, who began to retreat backward slowly, a step at a time, the snake following him.

When at length, in this manner, he had drawn the hideous creature some ten or fifteen feet from its hole, he suddenly squatted down and began to play more loudly and shrilly. At this the serpent raised itself on its tail, as when about to make his deadly spring, and actually commenced a dancing motion, in time with the music, when the charmer gave me the signal to strike. Guardedly and stealthily I advanced near enough for the blow, and then struck, cutting the reptile in two, and sending its head flying to some distance. I never took life with better satisfaction.

Whatever deception there might be about the juggler's tricks, there was certainly none about the snake, for I have its skin still in my possession. I gave the man a couple of gold mohurs, and he went away perfectly satisfied, wishing my excellency any quantity of good luck. I was perfectly satisfied, too, and would not have missed seeing what I did that day for ten times the amount I paid.

Anecdote of Mendelssohn.

Frederick II. of Prussia was very fond of having artists, literary men, and singers of talent at his small suppers, and he enjoyed free humor and encouraged gaiety with all his power. Personally fond of music and literature, he had a special liking for the philosopher Mendelssohn, who was very witty, as hunchbacks usually are, and he often, relates a writer in "Temple Bar," gave him a seat at supper by his side. It so happened that some small ambassador—Germany was then divided into a number of microscopic countries with pigmy sovereigns—tried to chaff Mendelssohn, who, with his quick repartee, turned the tables at once on his adversary. Furious, his dwarfish excellence ran to the king and complained of the plebeian being admitted into circles above his reach, etc. The king said to him:

"Mendelssohn was my guest, as you were, and you should not have joked him, or you should take the consequences."

"Ah," said the ambassador, "he is a man who would consider nobody, and would offend your majesty if it so happened that for some imaginary reason he thought himself hurt."

"Well," said the king, "but I shall give him no reason for feeling hurt; and, my way, he would not offend me."

"Is it a wager?" asked the ambassador.

"Certainly," replied the king.

"Well, if your majesty will do what I say, we will soon see whether I am right or wrong."

"And what do you want me to do?"

"Will your majesty, at the next supper party, write on a piece of paper, 'Mendelssohn is an ass,' and put that paper, signed by your own hand, on his plate?"

"I will not; that would be a gratuitous rudeness."

"It is only to see what he would do, whether his presence of mind is so great, and in what way he would reply to your majesty."

"Well, if it is just for an experiment, and I am at liberty to afterward tell him that I by no means intended to offend him, I do not mind complying with your wish."

"Agreed; only the paper must be signed under the words, 'Mendelssohn is an ass,' so that there can be no doubt in his mind that it comes from your majesty."

Reluctantly, but with a feeling of curiosity as to how it would end, the king wrote and signed the paper as required. The evening came; the table was laid for twelve; the fatal paper was on Mendelssohn's plate, and the guests, several of whom had been informed of what was going on, assembled. At the given moment all went to the ominous table and sat around it. The moment Mendelssohn sat down, being rather short sighted, and observing some paper, he took it very near his eye, and, having read it, gave a start.

"What is the matter?" said the king.

"No unpleasant news, I hope, Mendelssohn?"

"Oh, no," said Mendelssohn; "it is nothing!"

"Nothing? Nothing would not have made you start. I demand to know what it is."

"Oh, it is not worth while—"

"But I tell you that it is. I command you to tell me."

"Oh, some one has taken the liberty to joke in very bad taste with your majesty!"

"With me? Pray do not keep me waiting any longer. What is it?"

"Why, somebody wrote here, 'Mendelssohn is an ass, Frederick the Second.'"

Work.

We are all of us workers in one way or another, but how many of us are possessed with an earnest desire that the work we put from our hands shall be a thorough, honest, faithful performance that shall fulfil its purpose and withstand the ravages of time? The great difference in labor is, not in what is done—not in the kind of work we perform, but in the spirit we put into it. From the cleansing of a room to the purification of a government, from the clearing of a forest to the chiseling of a statue, from the humblest work of the hands to the noblest work of heart and brain, it is the determination to make it of the best possible quality that places it in the front rank. The work that is performed only for the sake of what it will bring, not for what it will carry forth, is like cloth of shoddy, which may please the eye, but will not wear. It is cheap, flimsy stuff, woven with no nobler purpose than to hold together long enough to be bought and paid for.

Games for Winter Evenings.

It is not beneath the dignity of parents or grown-up relatives to amuse the children occasionally, and make home attractive to them during the long winter evenings by the introduction of merry games or simple charades. Some children are very quick and clever; impromptu charades are generally beyond them, but pre-arranged charades are often very well performed. Fairy tales are immensely fancied for children's plays. "Cinderella," "Beauty and the Beast," "Babes in the Wood," and other similar themes have been very well arranged for this purpose, and the necessary rehearsing creates endless amusement. A pleasant game is called "Coach and Quiz." Two persons of merry wit should assume the office of leading this game, one being entitled the "coach" and the other the "quiz." The coach begins by stating, in a pompous manner, that his great learning has enabled him to instruct all manner of persons upon all possible subjects, and that he is ready to prepare any applicant for success in any competitive examination, and will at once exhibit his method. He then passes around the circle of players, whispering into the ear of each some of the current conversational phrases that are now so abundant, and urges them aloud to remember these words as the answer that will ensure success. When this is accomplished the quiz takes up his duty, and in professional style asks a question of each person, receiving the answer that has been thus prepared. The more profound and scientific the question the more absurd will be the effect of the grotesque or "slang" answer, which should be pronounced with apparent earnestness. "Combinations" is much quieter. It consists merely of giving a list of several words to a comrade, who is expected to form them into some brief but sensible sentence. Two or three persons can find it a very useful exercise of the mind and memory as a domestic entertainment. "Contrary Customs" can be enjoyed by very small children, who greatly enjoy the blunders. If desired forfeits can be exacted for the mistakes, or the failure can be punished by exclusion. It must be first explained that in this game all things go by the contrary, and when the order to hold on is given every one must let go, and the reverse. The director of the play then produces a piece of string, tape, or ribbon for each of his playmates, and gathers one end of each into his own hand, while allotting an end to each player. He then issues the orders with rapidity, so as to bewilder the players, who will often err by forgetting to let go when strongly directed to hold on, and the contrary.

Twilight Dew.

'Tis not the beauty of thy form that lures,
Nor yet the soft expression of thine eye;
There's something in thy manner that assures
A faltering spirit as it passes by.

A something beaming in thine inner life
That burns its way into the very soul;
With sweet simplicity each charm is rife,
Which beautifies the whole.

So like the rose which gently droops its head
With modest blushes—more than passing fair,
When grouped with choicest flowers of the bed,
How well doth it compare.

And can you chide the gentle twilight dew
For fondly clinging to the fragrant rose?
When it is banished far away from you,
Where can it find repose?

—Helen G. Ames.

VARIETIES.

Vigilance committees have been organized in Des Moines, Iowa, to rid the city of the rough native and imported element.

In the fifty years, from 1830 to 1880, the amount of money invested in cotton manufactures in the United States increased from \$40,000,000 to \$225,000,000, and the bales consumed from 194,390 to 2,000,000.

Caution in the premises: "Hahn't I better pray for rain to day, deacon?" said a Binghamton minister, Sunday.

"Not to-day, dominie, I think," was the prudent reply; "the wind isn't right." Getting ready: "Do you keep a full supply of base ball requirements here?" asked a gloomy-browed young man the other day, as he entered a Market street hardware store. "Yes, sir. Everything in that line." "Then you may wrap me up a bottle of arnica, a paper of court-plaster and a green eye-shade. I'm going to catch for the Knickerbocker nine this afternoon."

Hannah Michael, a Jewess, is an inmate of the girls' prison at Middletown Conn. She refused to take part in the Christian services held in the chapel, further than to attend them with the rest of the convicts, and the matron, after insisting in vain that she should join in certain responses, whipped her so severely that her back and arms were scarred when shown to a visitor two weeks afterward.

A patriotic purpose: A solemn-looking son of Erin, who had been hanging about the ticket office of a railroad company apparently without any purpose, was tackled by the factious clerk. "What's your name, pappy?" "Terence Rooney, at your service." "Got any baggage, Terence?" "Yes, sir; a bottle of whisky and a bundle of shillelahs." "Where are you going?" "Going West to start an Oirish republic. The clerk withdrew.

The Girl Who Dares.

Young women who are not smart in anything else are always smart in love. Their invention does not fail them, and there is always a stroke of boldness that would amaze the world if undertaken by anybody else. Something great, therefore, is always looked for from the innocent and apparently docile young women who are driven into a corner by love. They repeatedly show how the terrestrial angel rushes in where the other kind would fear to tread.

There are a great many illustrations of this, but the recent exploit of a young woman in Arkansas is a little out of the ordinary run of illustrations. As young men are more common out there than in this part of the country—or rather, as young women are more uncommon—this particular Arkansas girl had two lovers. Like a true girl, she was highly delighted with both of them, and probably, just like a girl also, she would have been delighted still more had her lovers numbered a dozen or a score. But as they did not she had to get along with two; and she endured it like a martyr. When the time came to determine between them she found she had made a mess of it by engaging herself to the wrong young man. She was not long in finding this out and notifying the other young man. Her proposition was to marry the young man to whom she was engaged and elope with the other in six months.

This scheme seems to have been accepted, as both propositions have been carried out. It was something that could be made effective in Arkansas. It is a good enough thing in its way for any part of the West where boys are cheap and girls are scarce. It wouldn't do here, however, where there are girls enough for every boy to have one, and it would be a pretty hazardous undertaking for a girl to carry off two within six months. Nevertheless, it cannot be told that a girl won't do when she gets in love. That which goes for common sense doesn't have much show in a struggle with love.

M B Steele