

# The Louisiana Democrat.

E. A. BLOSSAT THE WORLD IS GOVERNED TOO MUCH. PUBLISHER  
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## The Democrat.

**TERMS:**  
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Attorney at Law,  
ALEXANDRIA, LA.

OFFICE in the rear of Jacob Walker's store.  
Sept. 8th, 1869-71.

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and  
Notary Public  
ALEXANDRIA, LA.

Sept. 1, 1869-71.

**ROBT. P. HUNTER,**  
Attorney at Law and Notary Public,  
ALEXANDRIA, LA.

Sept. 1, 1869-71.

**W. S. L. BRINGHURST,**  
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Feb. 8, 1871-72.

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### Our Post's Corner—Selected

**A SUMMER DAY.**  
BY H. L. F.

Sunshine over the meadow lands,  
Kissing the crimson clover,  
And sunshine haunting the lily cups  
That the yellow bees hung over,  
And over the dimpling river—  
I wished that the sun and summer day  
Might shine and last forever

And when we came up the meadow path,  
Our hearts sang over and over,  
"O sweet, glad day for blossom and bird,  
And for every blithe young lover"  
And yet I know not the words she said,  
Or whether she spoke at all;  
But of all sweet days, that Summer day  
I count as the best of all.

We walked down by the meadow path,  
The broad highway forsaking,  
For the quiet of that lovely spot,  
Seemed better for our love-making;  
And I was silent, and she was shy,  
And we walked down thro' the clover;  
We thought it the sweetest Summer day  
That ever the sun shone over.

### THE RED PICTURE!

BY M. W.

Guy Chevenix went up the spiral staircase with me. I could not resist the feeling of dislike which I had taken for him at the instant of my arrival, and which now, at the sight of his tall, slender figure ascending so stealthily ahead, was increased ten-fold. I think I feared him. I had not sat calmly under those steel-gray eyes, which even as I went behind him, yet seemed peering at me from their corners over his shoulders. I had not been able to unclose those narrow pink lips whose memory still filled me with loathing.—I had recoiled through the whole interview from those dry, crisp whiskers, running like dead, unwholesome ivy up the sides of his faded face, from that cold, iron gray hair, resting like hoar-frost upon his head.

They said he was young in years, though prematurely old in everything else. I could well believe it, despite his appearance. The used-up and worn-out air only told the story more fully.

We reached the room at last, and went in; and hardly had he crossed the sill, when he suddenly turned and motioned me to a seat. I looked into his stern eyes for some explanation, but they were fathomless as ever. His lips only had paled a little, and quivered visibly as they coiled themselves apart from his small, white teeth.

"Attend me, Lyncroft," he said, when I had obeyed his first gesture. "You know very well that, were it not impossible, you would be taken to some other chamber than this. But every hole in the house is occupied, and I am compelled to use the privilege of old friendship and put you here. Any one of the fools down stairs would go away aggrieved if I were to propose a thing of the sort to him; but you have sense enough to comprehend the circumstances, I believe, and I trust will endeavor to make yourself comfortable until I can do better."

While he had been speaking, my sight had been fascinated to the wall behind him. A picture hung there—the portrait of one of Peter Lely's court beauties; but the frame, strangely enough, was not of gilt, but of deep crimson. So startled was I, that for a moment, I could not take my eyes away, and could not answer his question.

However, I partly came to myself, and said, candidly, "Chevenix, it is perfectly absurd to offer me an apology about any such matter as what sort of a room I am given while I stop with you. Certainly, everything seems comfortable about here; a good bed, a desk, a washstand, and, better than all, a remarkably curious picture.—Copy, isn't it?"

He shivered slightly, as I spoke the last words, but I noticed with some wonder, did not turn toward the picture as he made his reply.

"Yes," he answered, in short, sharp sentences, "a copy. Done by an Italian. Formerly my musicmaster. You remember, I suppose, the story. Everybody knows it. But let us say no more of the matter now. It's rather painful to me, Lyncroft."

I besought forgiveness for having made my thoughtless reference, but he impatiently cut me short by going to the door.

"I hope you will rest well to-night. This part of the house is rather dreary, but you've got rid of all the nonsense in your character by this time, eh?—Till dinner, then?"

And he left me. I sat down very calmly to think of the matter of which he had spoken. Every circumstance came back vividly to my mind. Six years ago, Guy Chevenix had married a beautiful girl of seventeen. The match was not one of affection, for he was a man born only to be feared; and, as he often said, quoting Machiavel, to be feared was better than to be loved. A few months had scarcely

gone by, when it was evident that the poor child whom he had taken to his bosom was withering there under his stern glance. He suspected this, perhaps, and endeavored to lessen the gloom of her life, by surrounding her with ceaseless gaiety and distraction. Among other means he employed music, engaging a professor of the art to live in the house with her, from whom she was to take lessons on an instrument she had never yet learned—the harp. This man was a young Italian—an artist and poet, as well as master of his chosen vocation. His modesty and evident abilities had commended him to Chevenix; but it was in a hapless hour that the treaty between them was made. The reader already foresees the end. The Italian and Eleanor Chevenix were thrown constantly together; she sympathized with his ambition, and he with her despair. In a word, they soon loved each other with an ardor that was absolutely madness.

Such wild passion could not long be concealed. One day Chevenix came upon them, and caught the Italian upon his knees, kissing the wife's hand. At the sight of her husband's implacable face, over which there rippled no look of surprise, but a demon's smile of pitying contempt, she fainted. The music master rose to his feet, and bowed sally.

"Sir," he said, "I have done wrong; I am prepared to suffer."

"Be assured you shall," returned Chevenix, quietly—may, almost gently.

What became of that unfortunate Italian, no one ever knew. Chevenix called assistance, and had his wife taken below to her chamber, where, after a few days of delirium, she died.—Upon the night of her burial, there were cries of torture heard in the south wing. Some persons were presently desecrated leaving Burgoyne park in great precipitation. The servants strained their eyes from the windows to discover who these fugitives were, but all efforts proved in vain.

From this period Chevenix, a very fond before in the estimation of every one who knew him, became, if possible, worse. Heaven knows we have monsters enough upon the earth. History possesses the record, from the time of Caligula, Commodus, and the Roman Emperors, down to the days of the Regent of Orleans, and Lord Littleton the younger; but certainly no such outcast, abandoned from his own choice by God and man, had ever existed as the owner of Burgoyne park.

He commenced by resuming the dissipations of his earliest youth. For this purpose, he compelled his servants to occupy the north wing exclusively, never on any account to leave it except when called; and with seven or eight suitable companions he himself took possession of the main building. The orgies there conducted must certainly have rivaled anything that is known of Belshazzar or Sardanapalus. All night long, and every night, the sounds of mirth and madness rose upon the still air; even the distant villagers heard them, and shivered with nameless terror in their beds.

This, of course, could not continue but at great cost to him who kept it up. It was noticed that Chevenix grew gradually embarrassed in his pecuniary affairs; and to be brief, it at last followed that he became entirely bankrupt. However, by some means or other, he continued to save the park, lived there in complete seclusion, and now, when I had accidentally come upon him, was entertaining some of his old friends for the first time in a year.

These recollections, I say, all rose to my mind without effort. Recovering from the reverie into which they had plunged me for some moments, I glanced once more around the room. It was perfectly circular; the door to the east, the single window to the west. I knew instantly from these facts that I was in the turret. However, that did not make a great deal of difference; if I were visited by any ghosts—who, I had lately heard were partial to this quarter of the building—I should not feel disturbed at their presence; in truth, I should look upon such marks of attention from them as undoubtedly complimentary.

Suddenly, a gong struck below; its sonorous music floated through the house, and died away in sweet cadence along the corridors. I recognized the warning, and at once rose to prepare for dinner. First I relieved my belt of a revolver, which I had placed upon the desk; and then, assuring myself of the safety of my portfolio, I descended the spiral staircase.

At the end of the second flight I was abruptly confronted by Chevenix. He appeared to rise out of the very earth. His face seemed a little wild, and his motions nervous. I was rather taken aback, and waited to hear him speak. "Lyncroft," he said huskily, "ardon me what I am going to say. I know very well you have stopped here to-night; you have charge of a portfolio containing an immense sum of mon-

ey, and you are afraid to pursue your journey with it through the next forest at night. Is not that true?"

At first I was so amazed at the strangeness of the question that I could not answer. Finally, however, I replied quietly, "It is true, Chevenix."

"Listen to me, then," he continued, growing more agitated still. "I wish you to lend me part of that money. I will place everything I have in the world into your hands as assurance of its return—may, I will secure you my soul, my very soul, Lyncroft. I must obtain means at any cost for one more glorious revél!"

He began taking short steps to and fro, his limbs quivering with excitement, and his eyes lighted up with strange, unearthly fire.

"You have heard of the suppers of Rochester and Buckingham, of the Duchess of Berri, of the French Revolutionists? To mine they were nothing! You shall see for yourself, if you will. Come, Lyncroft, what say you? The money I must have, by the powers of perdition? Do not shake your head, man! Do not think to refuse me! I say to you, I will have the money!"

His voice rose almost into a scream. My first wild thought was that he had gone mad. I advanced to take him by the arm, and to use some kind of soothing persuasion until I could get him within reach of assistance. But he stood back, glaring at me angrily.

"Speak at once," he said; "I have set my hopes upon what I ask, and must not be disappointed. Refuse, then, at your personal peril."

This last threat was so much in the man's own style, that I instantly changed my mind with regard to his insanity. Consequently, I felt no further scruple on any score, and answered boldly, "Chevenix, you can not have one groat of the money. It has been entrusted to me; I am irresponsible for its delivery intact. Rather than be annoyed with these importunities, I will go away from Burgoyne Park, and confide myself to the forest and night."

He saw that I was in earnest, and passed for a second irresolute; then he burst into a short fit of hysterical laughter.

"I do but jest, Lyncroft," he said. "Come, old friend, let us go to dinner." He took my arm rather rudely, and we pursued our way.

"If you did not perceive that I was in jest, you can not know me very well. People will tell you that even grim Guy Chevenix is facetious sometimes. Oh, it is a mad world—a mad world! We are arrant knaves and lunatics all!"

At dinner he was even wilder still; but let me add that, withal, he did not taste a single drop of wine. His friends swallowed glass after glass in furious succession, and at every instant pressed bumps upon him; but he steadily refused all their challenges and salutations, and wetted his lips only with a little sweetened water.

At last the merriment grew so boisterous, so uncontrollable—though it was hardly a fair prologue to the supper which was to follow after midnight, that I could not sit still any longer. Besides, I felt by no means certain that I should be able to keep my wits about me if I continued to yield to the pressings to drink so many absurd toasts. To avoid this then I rose and sought the grounds.

Burgoyne park was truly a beautiful residence. Notwithstanding the neglect into which its present owner had permitted it to fall, there were yet traces of its past grandeur. I wandered everywhere, drinking in the splendor of the evening and the scene.

By some odd fortune, I presently found myself on the north side. Looking up accidentally at the turret, whose walls shone in the dying sunlight, I was at once rooted to the spot on which I stood. A second window, grated, and smaller than the window to the west, could be distinctly discerned. Certain was I that no such opening was apparent within my room. I wondered greatly.

However, the night came on very fast—the dinner, remember, had been late—and I was obliged to eat my speculations short, and go in. To avoid Chevenix and his boisterous company, I ran up the spiral staircase quickly and without noise, and sought my chamber. Igniting my candelabra, I looked around and examined my walls attentively; certainly there were no outlets excepting the western window and the door.

I took my light to set it upon the desk; but here I met with another surprise more startling than the first—my pistol was gone.

A very strange feeling of doubt and dread crept over me, which I can not describe. Yet, after a moment, I controlled myself sufficiently to examine my portfolio. I found it had not been touched; and then I sat down.

A thousand strange ideas, fantastic, some of them, and terrible, hurried through my mind upon each other's heels. Here was I to sleep alone in this ghastly room—its very form seemed to inspire me with terror; no soul by, no ear to catch a cry for help, no hand that might come to my assistance! For months and months this part of the building had been deserted. After nightfall no one would venture near it. A chill struck through my very bones.

I rose and locked the door. The hideous grudge of the bolt as the key forced it into its socket sounded like the death-rattle of a giant. Then I crept back to the desk and hid my face in my hands.

Another hour passed. The clock in the downward distance gave forth its notes plaintively; the wind caught them and bore them to me, as if they were weird music of the spheres. I felt my heart sink lower and lower.

Clearly I could not better employ my time than in reading. Before me lay a volume of M. de Motesquieu's Letters to the Abbe de Guasco. I put forth my hand to reach the book, and in doing so looked up.

What met my gaze, and newly tortured my already overstrained imagination? The Red Picture!

There upon the margin I could see the name in tall, gaunt characters, like letters of blood, "Le Portrait Rouge."

It was the portrait of Miss Jennings, whose story is told in the Memoirs of Grammont. The painter, I could very readily perceive, had used as basis simply an engraving, his own fancy dictating the main embellishments afterwards. For a while I certainly found relief from the agitation under which I had suffered by basking in the beauty of the face before me. But, as I continued to look, that strange feeling we all have when viewing a portrait came over me irresistibly; I fancied that the eyes were alive! It was an old illusion—a favorite one in my boyhood, I remembered when I used to steal away to a painting of my mother, and stand before it—and so I now, at first, laughed.

But, great Heaven! there they were, the eyes of the Red Picture keenly staring down! I moved rapidly across the chamber; they followed me; I came back, they returned too! I retreated backwards to the door, and still their steady glance tracked my footsteps.

Overcome with sickening terror, I dropped into the chair, and rested my face upon my knees. How long I may have sat thus I can not tell; but when I raised myself erect, there—there, by the Deity above us—were the eyes again! No light came from them; there was no fire in their orbs; the mysterious spark we call soul had never existed in their depths; but they saw, nevertheless! of the blind; so look the glaring balls of the corpse. Something is gone from both. As they seemed, to look the sightless pupils we know not what. But I swear these eyes of the picture, ghostly and dead, saw me! I felt myself freeze with horror in their unearthly presence.

And yet they smiled. The expression of the face was strangely sweet—may, angelic. The woman seemed just bursting into a mischievous laugh. The arch turn of the half-parted lips, the naive dimple in the cheeks, the comic pose of the head, were things absolutely bewitching. In life I could have kissed her who possessed them until I spent my being in kisses. But now the fatal eyes overshadowed all.

Madly I clenched my fingers, and rushed forward to beat the infernal vision into nothingness. Poisons, delusion, it should not kill me by the lingering death of fright. But only half-way across the apartment the fascination of the Unknown stopped me short. I could but glare back at it, tearing my hair from the root, and crushing my teeth together. The perspiration poured down my face, and yet my whole body was ice itself. I essayed to shriek, but my tongue was stiffened to the roof of my mouth.

And still the eyes, the haunting eyes, shone down. I fell upon my knees before the thing of canvas, and lifted my hands beseechingly. I only asked, thus mutely, for mercy, mercy! Yet it came not. The eyes seemed to mock me instead with their infernal smiles.

Then, driven to the desperation of maniacal despair, I stood up and seized the flaming candelabra. Holding it high above my head, the lights swaying and smoking like so many torches, I found my voice, and cried with the dreadful scream that is said to come up from the pit of hell! "Accursed picture, it is over! I will die, and your eyes shall no longer craze me! Thus do I consign thee to the perdition whence they came; thus do I set myself once more free!"

A storm of blows came against the door of the room. Hasty demands for

admittance sounded high as my own voice. But I was too frenzied to listen, and with one fearful effort I cursed the picture again, and hurled the flaming candelabra against it. A crash followed; the canvas burst from behind, the crimson flame fell to the floor, and within appeared the walls of a dungeon. Something stood in the niche, as at bay, watching me. I had not opportunity to take more than a glance at this apparition, in the lurid glare of the burning floor, when another fearful crash followed. The door at my back was wrenched open, and there stood Guy Chevenix, with a lamp in one hand, and a naked sword in the other.

"I am betrayed!" he exclaimed. His lamp enabled me to make out distinctly the form and features of the specter in the chasm of the false wall. Apparently an old man, it was gray, bent and broken. But oh! a morbid heaven has spared me ever seeing a sight since—for it was the face of the arch-fiend himself. I beheld two listless eyes, bloodshot, and of a slimy green; two red holes above the cheeks, where the nose had once been; mouths scarred and full of unhealed pustules, two pieces of decayed flesh on either side of the head; all that were left of the ears.

"Chevenix," said this figure, calmly, but decisively, "your hour has come. Behold the weapon in my hand. God has given me the power to avenge myself at last."

It was my pistol!

"I succeeded!" continued the specter, "after the patience of a year, in filling my chains this afternoon. I also was able to break the lock enter this room. The pistol lay before me; I seized it, and went back to my prison. I determined, when next you came to visit me, that you should not go away alive."

At once the truth flashed upon me. This was the Italian music master. His sentence had been mutilation and solitary confinement, until death should come. He had suffered, I could perceive, like another Marchiali of the Iron Mask. But he was free at last.

In a dream of wonder, I turned to look at his torturer. Chevenix had become deadly pale; his lips even white as ashes. But suddenly, even while I noticed this, he put down the light, darted forward, sprang up to the Italian, and plunged the sword into his breast. The man uttered a groan of agony, but recovered in a second, and aimed his pistol at his retreating enemy's back.

The object of Chevenix had been to rush from the door; but there was a flash, a report, and I saw him wheel abruptly and look directly into my face. I fancied for an instant that he had not been struck, but was about to give me some direction. The veins in his temple were full, and looked like gorged adders; bolts of fire shot from his eyes. But suddenly he tottered, like a broken tower, drew one breath, and fell directly upon his forehead. The thud of his weight resounded through the room.

Then the Italian fell.

I went over and touched the heart of Chevenix—it was still. His soul had fled out snuffing into the dark.

The ghastly face of the Italian told me that he, too, was dead.

**GOOD COUNSEL.**—No young man can hope to rise in society, or perform worthily his part in life, without a fair moral character. The basis of such a character is a virtuous, fixed sense of moral obligation, sustained and invigorated by his fear and love of God.—The youth who possesses such a character can be trusted. Integrity, justice, benevolence and truth are not with him words without meaning; he feels and knows their secret import and aims in the tenor of his life to exemplify the virtues they express. Such a man has decision of character; he knows what is right and is firm in pursuing it; he thinks and acts for himself, and is not to be made the tool of unprincipled and time-serving politicians to do the dirty work of party.—Such a man has true worth of character; his life is a blessing to himself, to his family, to society, and to the world; and he is pointed out to future generations as a proper example for the rising youth to emulate.

General Butler said, in a recent speech: "My enemies tell you that at the Charleston Convention I voted fifty-seven times for Jeff. Davis for President. I did—so preserve the Union. They tell you that every time, but they don't tell you that the boat I came away from Charleston on had on board a fugitive slave." It seems, then, that Butler not only betrayed Massachusetts by voting for Jeff. Davis, but betrayed South Carolina also by stealing a negro.—[Courier-Journal.]

It is said that in 1861 Speaker Blaine paid taxes on \$1750 worth of property only, and that he is now worth half a million. The god who directed Midas to bathe in the river Pactolus in order that everything he touched might turn to gold would now tell him simply to become a Radical member of Congress.—[Courier-Journal.]