The Louisiana Democrat.

The World Is Governed Too Much.

VOL. 57. ALEXANDRIA, LA., WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5, 1903. NO. 35

Day.

With silent feet Night walks the way,
All silver-paved by shining stars,
But, oh, how swift, when noon the day,
She hides behind Morn's golden bars.

Then how the little birds awake,
Pour lilies of song upon the air,
And blossoms fuller perfume shake
From dew bathed petals everywhere.

Love smiles, the sun pours forth his light,
Growth walks abroad, unhindered, free,
And perfect glory fills the sight
And, oh, be—

At Catfish Crossing

It was a rainy day at Catfish Crossing. Quite a few of the Crossing's most respected citizens were in session at Grimsel's grocery. Those meetings at Grimsel's grocery are never in executive session. They are open and above board. Any one may sit by and hear them. Frequently strangers who are passing through, whether traveling for pleasure or going across into Jersey, tarry a while at Grimsel's grocery. If there is a session of Crossing citizens on, these strangers will necessarily pause and listen. And often a look and a listen will inspire some one of them to throw in a little thing of his own on the subject in hand, or perhaps on some other subject.

On this particular rainy day at Catfish Crossing the visiting stranger at Grimsel's grocery was a tall man with a blue umbrella and a large Roman nose. The expression of his face was amiable, but his trousers were very short. He looked like a man who would tell the truth if it was necessary, but who

[illegible] evidence of entire confidence in the credibility of the session; seemed as firmly fixed in his belief in it as he was in his belief that the big pitcher at the far end of the counter had cider in it.

A lull having come in the proceedings, the stranger spoke and said:

"I see you use pine sawdust for beddin' down your horses over here, and there ain't nothin' better."

Squire Hilduff, who sat on the woodbox, said no, there wasn't.

"There ain't no doubt, neither," continued the stranger, "that this here corn fordin' meal some one has conjured up for mulin' hens lay whether they want to or not is built on the right idee."

Old Billy Camp, from the cracker barrel, said there wasn't no kind o' doubt of it, 'cause he had tried it.

"But let me warn you!" said the stranger, "Beware o' nigh-sighted hired men!"

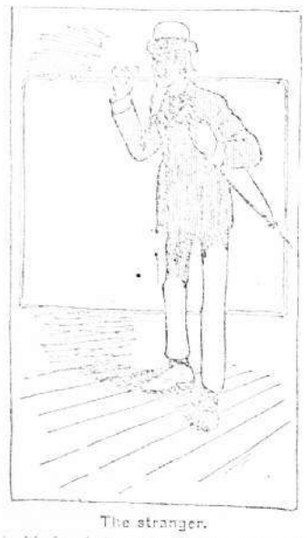
This made everybody prick up his ears and look around a little queer; but Buzzardtooth Bill Fritchey, sitting on the nail keg, cracked two or three of his fingers and said:

"Yes."

"Yes!" exclaimed the stranger, hoisting himself up on the counter and glaring longingly down at the pitcher at the other end. "Well, I should say it was yes! Go ask Uncle David Breckendarter! Go over to the vale o' Peebuck, if you want to know, and ask Uncle David Breckendarter!"

Nobody got up to go, and the stranger resumed:

"Uncle David Breckendarter," said he, "keeps swads of chickens. Scads of 'em. Not so long ago he read in the paper about this here egg fordin' meal to make hens lay whether they wanted to or not, and he sent and got a big lot of it. Then, about that time, Bob Jeffers, who'd been hired man for Uncle David for three years, took it



The stranger.

in his head that he'd like to see more o' the world than he thought he could get a glimpse of in the sweet vale o' Peebuck, and so he hired out to a man down at Spoon Hill. But it happened that another chap comes along lookin' for work just about then, and Uncle David hired him. He was a willin' hand and a worker, but when it was too late Uncle David discovered that he had one bad fault. He was almost ridiculously enamored to play the fiddle and he fid-fig a deg.

"Uncle David had the best cows about feedin' chickens and feddin' the horses, and he picked into work. 'Twa'n't long before Uncle David set to wonderin' why he see the feddin' so slim in the horses' stalls when he went out to the barn mornin's, and he says to the man:

"'Feddin' those hosses reglar?'

"'Yes, sure!' the man says.

"'Sawdust?' says Uncle David.

"'Every night,' says the man.

"'It's extraordinary sleeping where they lick it to,' says Uncle David, and

"Uncle David took a hammer—"

he hitched up and went over to the choppin' block for a load o' wood.

"It went along and it went along, and then Uncle David discovered somethin' that made him stare and ponder. He found the boxes was pulled. Feds lay out o' the mangers and twistin' it around in the slyest-est kind of a way on the floor. Mainly feddin' rests out of it, so it seemed, and you might say somnolic' fo 'em.

"'Seems to me like as if them there hosses o' mine must be mighty crazy!' says Uncle David. 'Ridin' feds instead o' ridin' on 'em! Must be clean beat feddin' on 'em at night and makin' their own beddin' out of the hay they ought to be eatin'!' he says. 'What ails you, anyhow?' he says to 'em, and had hard work to make 'em come out and be mischief.

"While Uncle David was feddin' of 'em, pitin' 'em a die and a bit every now and then, and I'm pleased enough a little, he was a-fit somewhat riled at 'em for the queer ways they had fell into, Aunt Sally come to the kitchen door.

"'David!' she hollers to him.

"'What?' Uncle David hollers back.

"'I've been pickerin' for eggs!' Aunt Sally hollers.

"'Well,' Uncle David hollers back, 'There ain't no law agin it, is there?'

"'No,' hollers Aunt Sally. 'But come and see 'em. They're slow me.'

"So Uncle David, grumblin' and crowlin', went to the house to see what sort o' capers the eggs was cuttin' up.

"'There!' says Aunt Sally, pointin' to a dozen or two of eggs in a bowl on the table. 'There's 'em. What have struck 'em?' she asks.

"The eggs was as yallor, most, as a sunflower, and had a smile in 'em like a board.

"'Eddin,' says Uncle David, startin' at 'em a minute. 'They're wood, ain't they?'

"'Yours to no-ee!' says Aunt Sally.

"Then Uncle David took a hammer, and after lickin' one of the eggs a couple o' hard whacks, it split, and sure enough, the shell was wood, but pitch, at that, with not a thing where the yolk ought to been but a little pine knot! And that's the way they all was. Uncle David looked at Aunt Sally, and Aunt Sally looked at Uncle David. Then somethin' seemed to break in onto Uncle David's mind, and he just jumped and hollered.

"'Great Rocks aburtin'!' he hollers. 'Where's that hired man?'

Uncle David rushed out and met the hired man eomin' from the barn.

"'Here!' he says to him, grabbin' him by the arm. 'What's ailin' o' you? Can't you see?'

"And then the hired man up and told him.

"'No,' he says. 'I can't see nothin' good, 'cause I'm about as nigh-sighted as they make 'em,' he says.

"'And you've been feddin' the hosses wood!'

"'Yes, sir,' says the hired man, 'I thought it was mighty queer how they stood it, but I'm that nigh-sighted I can't see good enough to tell, so I just kept on feddin' 'em.'

"Uncle David he put his hand to his head and sot down on a bench and groaned.

"'Them hosses is ruined!' he says. 'Ruined complete