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Original Tale.

Written expressly for the "Bedford Gazette."

IDLE HOURS.

BY A FLOWMAN.

(Concluded from last week's paper.)

A letter containing the information, he had for some time dreaded, was that day handed to him from the Colonel, intimating his determination of withholding from him further supplies, since the money already advanced, amounted to more than the value of the property bequeathed him by his father. As an interview would be unavailing, while it could be only painful to the feelings of both, he hoped one would not be insisted on. With whatever certainty an evil may be anticipated, previous preparation scarcely renders the shock less violent when it actually occurs. Young Baldwin rushed from his lodgings in a state bordering upon insanity. Endeavoring in vain to find a temporary respite from his agonizing feelings and unconscious of what he was doing, towards evening from the influence of habit, he repaired to the house of Colonel Prussing. All were, as usual, engaged in play when he entered, and he took his customary seat as if he had the means of joining them.

The Colonel apparently surprised at his presence, asked him if he had not received his letter, and if so, and he wished an interview, he must see that the present place and time were not the best adapted for it. Robert bowed acquiescence and withdrew to a distant corner of the apartment, where he intimated his intention of awaiting Colonel Prussing's leisure, by whom he was, in a few moments, led into an adjoining room. His receipts for the sums advanced to him, together with an authenticated valuation of his property, were laid before him, and the balance was against him to a tolerably considerable amount. Utter ruin stared him in the face, and he vehemently, in the name of the friendship he bore his departed father, and of the many favors he had confessed himself to have received from him, supplicated Prussing to give him but the means of once again trying his fortune.

"It is far, very far indeed, from my wish," replied the Colonel, "to deprive you from all possibility of retrieving yourself; but my own losses of late have been so considerable that however willing, I have not the means of assisting you."

"There is only one chance I see for you; but I am convinced it would be of such a nature, as to be scornfully rejected by you."

"Name it, name it," cried Baldwin, eagerly interrupting him, "my condition is so desperate as effectually to drown all qualms of conscience. In the name of God, keep me no longer in this dreadful suspense!"

"As you insist upon it, I shall, however reluctantly, comply, but remember it the proposal offers you, you have only yourself to blame. You have plighted your troth to Constance Merle, whom I have long wished to see united to a dear friend of my own. Now, what think you of letting the dice decide, whether you or she shall be the fortunate man. Should you win, Constance remains your own and with her \$500 dollars, a sum amply sufficient to turn the wheel of fortune. Should I, on the contrary, be successful, why then you must renounce her."

"Despicable scoundrel! to judge of the feelings of others by those which actuate your own sordid bosom! It was for this, then that you drew me on, day by day, until you have plundered me of all that I was worth in money, and now you would take all that makes life worth the throw of a dice; heavens! what punishment does not your infamy deserve!"

"Don't allow yourself to be thus carried away by your intemperate feelings, my dear sir; what I proposed I felt convinced would have been rejected; your indignation does your head and heart honor; but you should be just to me and remember that I did not draw you on and never advanced you a dollar but at your own urgent request, or to relieve you from very pressing difficulties, and with these words the Colonel withdrew, and resumed his place at the hazard table.

reasoning within himself to quiet a conscience of late too easily subdued; furnishing but another proof of the fact that he who takes the first step into the downward road to ruin, will find how much more easy it is to take each succeeding one until the lowest depth be reached.

The clock was striking twelve, the hour at which the players were wont to separate—no time was to be lost—Robert Baldwin moved almost mechanically towards the Colonel and accepted the proposal that so short a time before, had fired him with such intense indignation.

"The stake," he said "is a considerable one, and I am determined to try my fortune with the new dice I have purchased this morning."

"You are perfectly at liberty to do as you please; pray commence," rejoined Prussing, with the characteristic coolness of a professed gambler.

Robert shook the dice, and his morning lesson was not neglected.

"Twelve, on my honor," cried he in an ecstasy of triumph, "the highest possible number, beat that Colonel if you can."

"You are over hasty, young man, have a moment's patience," replied the latter, while, with his utmost force, he dashed the dice on the table, one of which split assunder by the violence of the throw, thus giving him the advantage of three dice, in lieu of two—"Fourteen as I live! You have lost Constance!"

"No, no, this is foul play, a shameful imposition," screamed Robert Baldwin.

"Then you yourself are the impostor, retorted the Colonel—"Did not the dice belong to you?—Your conduct is contemptible, to use no harsher phrase; in attempting to question my right to the possession of what I have fairly won."

As Robert Baldwin now that all excitement was removed, became fully conscious of the horrors of his situation, a convulsive shudder crept through his whole frame, huge drops of perspiration rolled over his forehead, and he remained for a few moments stupefied as if rooted to the spot. Nature at length resumed her functions, and with a terrible imprecation upon the authors of his ruin, he rushed from their presence.

CHAPTER III.

Two years had elapsed since the fatal night when the events above detailed occurred, and Constance Merle sat in her chamber sorrowing for her absent lover, from whom she had never heard since his departure from the home of his childhood, so soon after his father's funeral. He had promised her then, to return speedily, and to write to her often; he had done neither. His uncle had now settled up his estate, which seemed to go begging for an heir; for Colonel Prussing, though fully empowered to take possession at any moment seemed in no hurry to assert his claim. Robert Baldwin had disappeared from the country so suddenly and so completely that he was forgotten by all but the faithful heart that was still his own, and that kept its long, weary, sleepless vigils awaiting his return until "hope deferred" seemed rapidly giving place to despair. Yes, there was one other that did not forget him, one other that loved him almost with a father's love, though his name never crossed his lips; one other who when Robert had so suddenly disappeared, tracked him through all his wanderings to his present abiding-place and held ward and watch at a distance over the prodigal, that his purpose might not be suspected, until the hour when his redemption might be assured.

When Robert so suddenly left the mansion of Colonel Prussing and rushed out into the street the cold night air that fanned his fevered temples, recalled him to himself, and as he looked upwards and beheld the bright, glorious stars, that hold their festival around the throne of their Creator, slumbering calmly like islands upon the bosom of the ocean, he seemed to hear his father's voice mingling with "the music of the spheres," hymning that glorious song that was sung to the Shepherds of Chaldea, "Peace on earth, to men good will," bidding his throbbing heart and brain be still. A holy calm succeeded to the tumult that was raging within him, and walking steadily onward, by the time he had reached the open country, having had leisure for reflection, he had determined on the course of his future life.

After a tedious journey of some weeks duration he found himself in a large Southwestern City, and devoting his time with the unwearied energy with which he was naturally endowed, to the business he had learned so well, beginning at the bottom of the ladder and walking his way gradually but surely upwards, he soon became a merchant of considerable means and respectable standing.

Colonel Prussing had tracked him in the various disguises, he had assumed and though he had changed his name, still the Colonel was informed of his almost every act, from the hour of his departure from his roof. A faithful

correspondent kept him thoroughly posted.—Why did he hunt after the fugitive, with such solicitude. He had a purpose. Was it to beggar him again when he would be worth the labor?

Robert had been now two years in his new home having renewed the vow in his own heart, which he had so solemnly made by his father's death-bed, the memory of her whom he had lost and whom he expected to meet again only in heaven, when, after one of those protracted periods of rainy weather which are common to portions of the South West, that terrible epidemic, typhus fever, broke out in the neighborhood, having been superinduced by the vast amount of decaying vegetable matter which under the combined influence of heat and moisture, steamed forth continually a sickening and pestilential miasma. Robert Baldwin became one of the earliest subjects of its attack.—For weeks his life hung upon a thread, but he was happily unconscious of his sufferings. In his boisterous ravings, or in the low muttering of his delirium, the name of Constance was ever upon his lips, and he must have often left that her spirit, at least, was near him, for in the wildest paroxysms of his fever, when it was impossible to control him, he would utter her name, and then, with a smile sweet as that which first needles upon the tiny cheek of the babe, he would sink down calmly and quietly as if the troublous storm was stilled.

When he had somewhat recovered, the faithful physician, who had so carefully attended him in his long and trying illness, entered his room one day, and approaching him said, "I have brought with me now, to introduce to you one of the two careful nurses, who have aided me to save your life, and you must, at least, thank him, though I know not his name, as he has refused to give it to me."

Robert raised himself upon his elbow, and beheld Colonel Prussing, who now advanced towards him—"Stand back, villain!" exclaimed the sick man, "you have robbed me of all I was worth in worldly goods, and then, of the woman I loved, and sent me adrift upon the world to perish like a beggar. Begone from my sight."

"Robert Baldwin, you shall hear me first," spoke the Colonel, "and then you shall repeat what you have said, or you shall say whatever your heart will dictate. Allow me first, to congratulate you on your recovery, and on the honorable and manly course you have pursued since our last meeting. You will remember the first night I met you in a gambling-hell, I went there to seek for you. During my absence from town, at that time, you had fallen a victim to the vice which was the cause of all your sorrows; and, on my return.—Your father had requested me to watch over you when he sent you to the city in with I resided, and if I had not had another weighty reason for doing so, his wish would have been law to me. You will remember how I met there: I saw that the passion for play had taken too deep a root in your bosom to be easily eradicated; and, that to reason for remembrance with you, would have been unavailing as the only chance of redeeming you, I extorted a promise from you to risk your money in my house only. The friends of mine who you met there, and myself, had so arranged matters as that you only could be the loser. They were friends upon whom I could place implicit reliance, and were willing to aid in my efforts to redeem, from ruin, the son of my benefactor, for such was your father's name. The money which they won from you every evening, was returned to me to the cent. It was I, too, who sent to you the dividend from whom you purchased the loadstone, to tempt you, as it was my wish to see you that there is no action, however just, that can lead a man of otherwise exalted feelings and nice sense of honor to commit. I knew that there was a noble heart throbbing beneath the load of guilt which enveloped you in a cloud, and I wished to purify it, that you might be worthy of the dear girl whose happiness you would otherwise have blighted. She is dear to me, as the daughter of a dead sister, though you never knew that, by your father's death, she was dear to be sacrificed. She is not acquainted with your conduct of folly, and never will be, from me, and you will find now in those and devoted to Constance Merle, a retired, entirely worthy the struggle you have made to redeem yourself. Now, whenever you are willing, call her your wife. I will live her to nurse you, as she has done for weeks past, until you are able to return to your paternal home, which is still your own; and I try ask myself the pleasure of, occasional witnessing the happiness of that domestic life her own little paradise, which was denied Constance Merle's bachelor uncle. No if you wish me to leave you, you may say so."

Robert, stretching out his arms, clasp them around the Colonel's neck, exclaim, "you are now indeed my father." We do not tell how Constance happened to have that Rob-

ert's bedside, for weeks past, a faithful nurse—how she succeeded in curing him more rapidly than any physician could have done; how they got home again to the old roof-tree; nor how the bachelor uncle, whenever he made a visit to the happy pair, his children, as he called them, could scarcely get away from them, so anxious were they to impart to him a portion of that happiness which filled their own hearts—how she endeavored to instill into the mind of a little Robert, who was the very image of his mother, the horror of Idle Hours.

Miscellaneous.

A MODERN DICTIONARY.

Public abuse—The mud with which every traveler is spattered on his road to distinction.

Distant relations—People who imagine they have a claim to rob you if you are rich, and to insult you if you are poor.

Belle—A beautiful, but useless insect without wings, whose colors fade on being removed from the sunshine.

Heart—A rare article, sometimes found in human beings. It is soon, however, destroyed by commerce with the world, or else becomes fatal to its possessor.

Housewifery—An ancient art, said to have been fashionable among young girls and wives; now entirely out of use, or practiced only by the lower orders.

Wealth—The most respectable quality of man.

Virtue—An awkward habit of acting differently from other people. A vulgar word. It creates great mirth in fashionable circles.

Honor—Shooting a friend through the head whom you love, in order to gain the praise of a few others whom you despise.

Laughter—An agreeable and contagious convulsion of the human countenance on receiving a tailor's bill, or being asked to return an umbrella.

Managers of Lotteries—Men who pay the Legislatures handsomely for the privilege of cheating the people.

Law proceedings—Unbrushed cobwebs of the dark ages.

Cigar—A slender, yellow speckled mass, formed of dried and folded leaves of a wonderful plant discovered by Raleigh. When women are false, and men selfish—when your creditor duns you like a fiend, and your debtor takes the act—when the future looks dark, and the present dreary, by the fragrance of this little instrument, extracted by means of fire, you are for a brief period rendered insensible to every sorrow, and lulled into dreams more entertaining than those of sleep.

Satirical poems—Harmless impertinences in verse.

Marriage—The gateway through which the lover leaves his enchanted regions and returns to earth.

Death—An ill-bred fellow, who visits people at all seasons, and insists upon their immediately returning his call.

Friend—A person who will not assist you because he knows your love will excuse him. Wedded bliss—A term used by Milton.

Bargain—A ludicrous transaction, in which each party thinks he has cheated the other.

Doctor—A man who kills you to-day to save you from dying to-morrow.

Lunatic Asylum—A kind of hospital, where detected lunatics are sent by those who have had the adroitness to conceal their own infirmity.

Tragedian—A fellow with a tin pot on his head, who stalks about the stage, and gets into a violent passion for so much a night.

Critic—A large dog that goes unchained, and barks at everything he does not comprehend.

Impossibility—Breakfast on board a steamboat without sausage.

Equality—Everybody, yet nobody;—equal to Colonel.

Jury—Twelve prisoners in a box to try one or more at the bar.

Young attorney—A useless member of society, who often goes where he has no business to be, because he has no business where he ought to be.

State's evidence—A wretch who is pardoned for being baser than his comrades.

Political honesty—Previous lexicographers have not noticed this word, treating it altogether as fabulous—for definition, vide self-interest.

The grave—An ugly hole in the ground, which lovers and poets wish they were in, but take uncommon pains to keep out of.

Sensibility—A quality by which its possessor in attempting to promote the happiness of other people, loses his own.

A man of talents—An impertinent scoundrel who thrusts himself forward; a writer of execrable poetry; a person without modesty; a noisy fellow; a speech-maker.

Lawyer—A learned gentleman, who rescues your estate from your enemy and keeps it

himself.
My dear—An expression used by man and wife at the commencement of a quarrel.
Honesty—An excellent joke.
Dentist—A person who finds work for his own teeth by taking out those of other people.
Fear—The shadow of hope.
Tongue—A little horse which is continually running away.

DOW'S ALPHABETICAL ADVICE.

A—Always attend to your own avocation; avoid ale houses and artful women.

B—Be benevolent but not prodigal, bury all bickerings in the bosom of forgetfulness.

C—Contrive to collect cash and keep it.

D—Do your duty and defy the devil.

E—Early endeavor to eradicate every error, both of head and heart.

F—Fight fairly when you fight; but the better way is not to fight at all. Fiddle for no fools.

G—Grace, goodness, gumption and a little goose grease, enable a man to slip through the world mighty easy. Get them and glory in them.

H—Harbor hope in your heart, if you would be happy; but bark ye, hope can't sunder nor rot the rope of the hangman.

I—Inquisitiveness is insufferable; indulge not in it.

J—Juleps may be called the juice of joy, and the juice of jest: but let them alone; too much jinking often destroys the joviality of the social circle.

K—Kindness kindles the fire of friendship. A kiss always avails more than a kick.

L—Love the Ladies, look before you leap, eschew loafing.

M—Make not mischief by meddling with other folks' business.

N—Never be caught napping except in the night time.

O—Order is Heaven's first law: obey it.

P—Pursue the plain path of probity, and put in practice what you will give in precept.

Q—Quarrel not, be not fond of asking questions, or addicted to queries.

R—Run ruins respectability; renounce, renew and renovate.

S—Sack satisfaction, ch, ye sinners! Become saints and you are safe.

T—Take time by the forelock; try to turn every moment to account.

U—Union unites to unity: in the whole universe there is union: be you therefore united for the sake of union.

V—Vanity has no connection with valor; remember that.

W—Women and wine bring want, woe and wretchedness, when wickedly indulged in.

X—Xtra 'xertions accomplish 'xtraordinary ends.

Y—Yield to no tyrant: yeomen and their yoke-fellows are lords of the soil.

Z—Zigzagging is characteristic of a zany; take a straight course through life, and zealously pursue it.

WATERMELON EXTRAORDINARY.

"How much do you ask for that melon?" said a cute dapper-looking chap to a sturdy darkey who was mounted upon a cart before one of the principal hotels in Philadelphia, some time ago.

"For dis big un? why, massa, I reckon he's wart three leevies, I does."

"Is it ripe?"

"O, yes, massa, he ripe, shu. I dun plug un through, if you say so."

With that the old darkey took out his jack-knife, and was making the first incision in the melon, when it gave a long, deep, piercing "oh!"

"Gosh amighty! what's dat?" exclaimed Cuff, dropping his knite.

"What do you stop for?" asked the gentleman.

"Bress God! I tot I heard him holler, I did."

"Com', cut away, and see if it is ripe."

He gave a poke with his knite, and this time the melon shrieked out:

"Oh, murder! you'll kill me!"

Before the last word was out, the melon went tumbling to the ground on the one side of the cart and the darkey on the other, bellowing, "O, de Lord! O, de Lord of hebbens!"

CURIOUS PICTURE OF VERSIFICATION.—Some English Knight of the Goose-quill (does he grow the quill he wields?) has just perpetrated the following, which he pretentorily describes as "Alphabetical Assertions, Briefly Collected, Describing Elegant Flirtations, Generally Happening, Nutting, (Opportunity Proceeding Queer Rumpuses,) Small Talk Under Volk's Windows, 'Xcting Youthful Zeal,' &c. &c."

Arthur Ask'd Amy's Affection
Bet, Being Benjamin's Bride,
Cicily Cut Charles' Connection,
Deborah Dicky Denied,
Eleanor's Eye Efficacious,
Frederick's Futility Feels;
Giles Gamed Georgiana—Good Graciosa!
Harry Hates Helen's High Heels.
Isaac Is Isabel's Idol,
Jenny Joers Jonathan Jones;
Katherine Knows Knock-Kneed Kit Krieda
Loves Leering Lucy's Long-bones,
Mary Meets Mortifications,
Nicholas Nancy Neglects,
Oliver's Odd Observations

Proves Peter Poor Patty Protects!
Quaker Quintillian's Queer Quibbles
Red Rachel's Reasons Resist
Soft Simon's Sympathy Scribbles
Tales To Tall Tabithy Twist.

Urethra Unthink Undoing
Voluble Valentine's Vest;
William's Wild Wickeder Wooing
'Xceeds Youthful Zelica's Zest.

WHY THE BLACK REPUBLICANS WANT WAR.

The Black Republicans are very angry with President Buchanan because he is unwilling to see his country devastated by war. They were in hopes that he would take the initiative, and thus relieve Lincoln of the responsibility and odium of making a civil, savage and unconstitutional war. They thought if war should be bequeathed as an inheritance to Mr. Buchanan's successor, that he could prosecute it without blame, or that he could make peace with glory. Do they want war? We do not well understand them, but begin to think that whether they do or not, they are making such a clamor, and getting public affairs in such a condition, that war will be inevitable.

Suppose the Black Republicans force a war in the event of secession? What then? The working classes of the North, who were cajoled into the support of Lincoln by the promise of peace, high wages and unexampled prosperity, will be called upon to enlist and march to the South to fight a people who have never injured them. They will be expected to fight the Black Republican battles, to invade Southern soil, and to pillage, burn and murder. The Black Republican party has thrown them out of employment, and to keep them from turning upon their rascally leaders and betrayers, and tearing them all to pieces, they will most probably kick up a war with the South, so as to get rid of the bone and sinew, the artisans and laboring men of the North who will be sent South under a pretended cry about country, only as food for gunpowder.—Pennsylvania.

A lady of Boston, Mass., writing to a friend, says:—"A ragged little urchin came to my door not long since, asking for old clothes. I brought him a rest and pair of pants, which I thought would be a comfortable fit. Young America took the garments and examined each, then, with a disconsolate look said; 'There ain't no watch pocket.'

GOOD SECURITY.—(Street sweeping boy)—"Please sir, give me a crown."

"Well—'Sixpence is the only small money I have, my little lad."

Boy—"Well sir, I'll get your change; and if yer doubts my honor, hold my broom."

Nearly four hundred negroes have held a camp meeting near Newark, New Jersey, lately. The favorite song was:

"We are here to-day to sing and pray
Oh—o—o—o. Y—a—a—a—ah.
To-morrow we will go away
Oh—o—o—o. Y—a—a—a—ah.

A GENTLE HIST.—"Why don't you get married?" said a young lady the other day to a bachelor friend.

"I have been trying for the last ten years to find some one who would be silly enough to have me," was the reply.

"I guess you haven't been up our way," was the insinuating rejoinder.

A NEGRO LICENSER.—I say, Sambo does ye know what makes de corn grow so fast when you put de manure on it?"

"No, I don't hardly."

"Now, I'll jist tell ye. When de corn begins to smell de manure it don't like de fumery, so it buries out ob de ground and gits up as fast as possible, so as not to breathe de bad air."

Those who shun society are neither very strong nor very weak.