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Choice Poetry.

THE CRUTCH IN THE CORNER.

BY JOHN M'INTOSH.

Why, Billy, your room is as cold as the hut
We had by the swamp and the river;
When we lost our Major and Tim, you know,
And forty more with the fever.
Well, Tom, old comrade, it's hard enough,
But the best at times knock under;
There's nary stick of wood in the house,
But that crutch in the corner yonder.

Sorry I 'listed! Don't ask me that, Tom;
If the flag was again in danger,
I would aim a gun with this aching stump
At the foe, were he brother or stranger.
But I say, ought a wound from a shot or a shell,
Or pistol bullet, by thunder!
Forever doom a poor fellow to want,
With that 'ar in the corner yonder!

That crutch, my comrade, ought ever to be
A draft at sight on the nation,
For honor, respect, and a friendly hand,
For clothing and quarters and ration.
I'd sooner have kicked the bucket twice o'er,
By a shell or a round ten pounder,
Than live such a life as I'm doing now,
With that 'ar in the corner yonder.

There's nary thing left for to pawn or sell,
And the Winter has closed on labor;
That medal is all that is left me now,
With my pistols and rusty sabre;
And them, by the sunlight above us, Tom,
No power from my touch can sunder,
Save the Power that releases me, at last,
From that 'ar in the corner yonder.

I can raise this arm that is left to me,
To the blessed Heavens above us,
And swear by the throne of the Father there,
And the angels all who love us,
That the hand I lost and the hand I have
Were never yet stained with plunder;
And for love of the grand old Flag, I now
Use that 'ar in the corner yonder.

Do I ask too much, when I say we boys,
Who fought for the nation's glory,
Now that the danger is past and gone,
In comfort should tell our story!
How should we have fought, when the mad shells screamed
And shivered our ranks, I wonder,
Had we known that our lot would have been to beg,
With that 'ar in the corner yonder!

There's little we hear of, now-a-days,
But "pardon" and "reconstruction,"
While the sojer who fought and bled for both,
Is left to his own destruction.
'Twould be well, I think, in these nipping times,
For these Congress fellows to ponder,
And think of us boys who use such things
As that 'ar in the corner yonder.

Select Story.

McCLELLAN, THE RANGER.

Interesting Story of Bygone Days.

"Mad Anthony Wayne," the hero of Stony Point, was the first American General who knew how to fight and whip Indians. He was never much of a planner, but as a bold, prompt, dashing executive officer, with that kind of magnetic force about him best calculated to win the confidence and maintain the spirit of his "boys," he was simply incomparable. His whole "art of war" seemed to be comprised in his own favorite command: "Charge! Charge the infernal rascals with the bayonet!" After the disastrous defeat of Generals Harmar and St Clair, especially in 1790 and '91, by the Ohio confederated tribes, the whole country, smarting under the disgrace, and alarmed for its western frontier, clamored for a third expedition and a skilled fighter.

Washington had been severely censured for his appointment of the infirm and unlucky St. Clair, and long hesitated between "Mad Anthony" Wayne and "Light-Horse Harry" Lee, the popular and intrepid partisan leader. For reasons not here necessary to mention, Wayne was chosen, and promptly repaired to Fort Pitt, (where Pittsburg now stands), to prepare his Legion of five thousand men. Wayne wisely determined to avoid the glaring errors of his predecessors. Such was the demoralization caused by the Harmar and St. Clair defeats that the very name of Indian was such a dread as to cause desertions by the score. Wayne was over a year picking, drilling and disciplining his Legion. Bad material was weeded out, order and discipline were introduced, the troops were constantly manœuvred, in the fields and woods, and rifle practice became a daily routine. But, most important of all, his scouts and rangers were selected with exceeding care, and embraced the most daring and successful Indian-trackers and fighters on the whole Western border. It is to this reason alone that his subsequent victory at Fallen Timber, which forever destroyed the power of the Ohio confederation, was so easy and conclusive. These rangers were his eyes, ears and hands. They scoured the woods far in advance and on both flanks. The savage out-runners ever found their sleepless adversary ready and wide awake—armed and wary at every point. His swarthy and stealthy foes could neither surprise nor even approach him without a struggle. This had not been the case with Wayne's predecessors, and at length the wily savages, with whom surprises and ambushes make all the battle, became discouraged. "No use," they grumbled, "fighting that man; his eyes never shut!" While he was at Fort Washington, (now Cincinnati), they called him General Chebang, which means "to-morrow," because, they said, he was ever promising their leaders gifts to-morrow, but never gave any. But now, on the march, they called him General All-eye. He had indeed learned much from the failures of others. Captain Ephraim Kibby, a trained and fearless scout from near Fort Washington, commanded these wood rangers, the most active and daring subdivison being under charge of Captain Wm. Wells, who, having been captured when a boy, had grown to manhood with the Indians, under the name of the Black Snake; had married the sister of the famed Chief, Little Turtle, and was thoroughly versed in all savage wiles and stratagems. Attached to Wells' command were some of the most reckless and dauntless scouts of the border. Of the most notable of these, more anon. It is our present purpose to sketch but one, Robert McClellan, a dare-devil ranger of extraordinary fearlessness, and as athletic and active a man on foot as has ever yet appeared in America. As with Fitz James—

"If a path were dangerous known,
The danger's self was lure alone."

On the grand parade at Fort Greenville, Ohio, where the ground was very little inclined, McClellan, to show his marvelous agility, once leaped over a road wagon, with the cover stretched over. The wagon and bows were eight and a half feet high. McClellan's name was afterward immortalized by the graphic pen of Washington Irving, in his "Astoria." Most of the information about this wiry and resolute scout is given by John McDonald, attached to Kibby's Rangers, in his "Sketches," now long out of print; but, after all, his relations were meagre, and, we are happily, enabled to supplement him from other sources. John, William and Robert McClellan were sons of a brave pioneer, living in Cumberland County, Pa., and were early schooled in all the arts of woodcraft, and inured to every hardship of border life. When mere boys, the three brothers followed the business—common in those days, when all their communications were few and far between—of pack-horse drivers, continuing in that roving and adventurous occupation for some years after the Revolution. In 1790, Robert's reckless and restless disposition, combined with his personal prowess, constrained him to seek adventures on a more perilous frontier, and for some time he served as a wood ranger at Fort Gower, on the Hockhocking, Ohio, and soon made a name for himself, having many singular adventures. One of these we condense from the autobiography of Rev James B. Finley.

At the Hockhocking block house, it was learned that the savages were gathering at an Indian town situated where now stands Lancaster, Ohio, and with the design of striking a stealthy blow at the border. White and McClellan—the two most fearless scouts, dauntless spirits who never yet had quailed at danger—were sent out on a scout. They pushed their march until they reached a remarkable prominence, now known as Mt. Pleasant, the Western termination of which is a perpendicular cliff some hundreds of feet high. This lofty point gained, every movement in the valley below was clearly discernible. For several days the brave scouts, secure in their rocky "coign of vantage," scanned every motion in the Indian town below—all the dances, sports, councils, and the arrivals of new parties. No fire or shots could be ventured; jerked venison, parched corn from their pouches, and rain-water, found in the rock's hollows, affording their sole subsistence. Soon this was exhausted, and a new supply became imperative. McClellan, being the cooler and more experienced of the two, started out, rifle in hand, and two canteens slung across his shoulders. Stealthily picking his steps, and making no more noise than does the panther, he descended to the plain, reached the river, and turning the bold spur of a hill, found a bountiful spring. He filled his canteens, and returned in safety. Not a swarthy visage was seen.

Emboldened by success, a daily supply of this delicious spring-water was planned, the service of bringing it being performed alternately. One day, when White had filled his canteen, had cooled his parched throat with a draught from the spring, and had reached the river on his return, the light sound of moccasined footsteps caught his attentive ear, and, upon quickly turning, he saw two squaws—one old and wrinkled, the other young and shapely—within a few feet of him.

The keen-eyed hag, on sighting the white scout, was stilled in her tracks as a statue, and then gave out a shrill and piercing Indian yell. White had to think quick. He knew his whole peril in an instant. Should the alarm reach the Indian town, he and McClellan were gone scouts. That blood-curdling yell must cease, and the squaw be throttled. Surely no other course; and, with his usual promptness, White leaped towards his victim, and, grasping the throats of each, he sprang with them into the river. The parchment head of the old hag he thrust under the water; but while essaying to do the same with her younger and more lovely companion, he met with a most vigorous resistance, and during the sharp struggle with the lithe and lissom athlete, to his amazement, she addressed him in somewhat broken English. He released the girl at once, and, at the same time relaxing his grip on the weasand of her throttled companion, the body floated off in the current, and the two stood alone together. She now informed him that she and her brother had been taken prisoners, ten years before, below the Wheeling settlement, and that her brother had made his escape on the second night after their capture, while she had been regularly adopted into the Shawnee tribe, and had lived with them ever since.

After brief questioning, White directed the girl to follow him. They had scarcely made more than half the way to the mount, when the shrill and dread alarm-cry was raised. The floating body of the squaw had been encountered by an outlying party of savages. Not a moment to lose, and the girl, declaring her willingness to flee, they both sped towards the scouts' retreat with the speed of hunted deer. They succeeded in safely reaching the rocky fastness, and rejoiced the startled McClellan; and, almost immediately afterward, Indians could be seen swarming in every direction, and a party of some twenty warriors making directly for the mount. Their swarthy foes were now observed gliding from tree to tree, and from rock to rock, till the scouts' position—except on the most perpendicular side—was completely surrounded. Nothing left but to sell their lives as dearly as possible, and the sun-kissed girl was advised to escape, and report that she had forcibly been taken prisoner. To their amazement, she replied: "No, no! Death to me, in the company of my own people, is a thousand times sweeter than captivity among savages. Give me a gun, and I will show you that I can fight as well as you. I will not budge from this spot; and should I fall and you escape, carry the tidings of my death to my long-lost relatives. Remonstrance was in vain, and the scouts now matured their plan of defense, and commenced firing to the front, where, from the very narrow backbone of the hill, the savages had to advance in single file and without covert. Beyond this narrow neck, the assailants availed themselves of rocks and trees.

A new danger now menaced. The wily foe was preparing to attack them, also, in the flank, which was feasible only in one way—by reaching an isolated rock lying in a recess on the southern hillside, and which dominated the scouts' position. From this point there could be no escape. Nothing could avert their fate but a wary eye, a steady hand, and an unerring rifle.

Our brave scouts saw the hopelessness of their situation, which nothing could avert but brave companions and an unerring shot; them they had not—but the brave never despair. With this certain fate resting upon them, they had continued as calm and as calculating, and as unwearied as the strongest desire of vengeance on a treacherous foe could produce. Soon McClellan saw a tall and swarthy figure preparing to spring from a cover so near the fatal rock, that a single bound must reach it, and all hope be destroyed. He felt that all depended on one advantageous shot; although but one inch of the warrior's body was exposed, and that at a distance of one hundred yards, he resolved to risk all. Coolly he raised the rifle to his eyes; carefully shading the sight with his hand, he drew a bead so sure, that he felt conscious it would do; he touched the hair trigger with his finger—the hammer came down—but in place of striking fire, it crushed his flint into a hundred fragments! Although he felt that the savage must reach the fatal rock before he could adjust another flint, he proceeded to the task with the utmost composure, casting many a fugitive glance toward the fearful point. Suddenly he saw the warrior stretching every muscle for the leap, and with the agility of a deer he made the spring; instead of reaching the rock, he sprang ten feet in the air, and gave one terrific yell; he fell upon the earth, and his dark corpse rolled fifty feet down the hill. He had evidently received a death shot from some unknown hand. A hundred voices from below re echoed the terrible shout, and it was evident that they had lost a favorite warrior, as well as been foiled for a time in their most important movement. A very few moments proved that the advantage so mysteriously gained, would be of short duration, for already the scouts caught a momentary glimpse of a swarthy warrior, cautiously advancing toward the cover so recently occupied by a fellow companion. Now, too, the attack in front was resumed with increased fury, so as to require the incessant fire of both scouts, to prevent the Indians from gaining the eminence; and in a short time McClellan saw the warrior behind the cover preparing for a leap to gain the fearful rock. The leap was made, and the warrior, turning a summerset, his corpse rolled down towards his companions; again a mysterious agent had interposed in their behalf. This second sacrifice cast dismay into the ranks of the assailants; and just as the sun was disappearing behind the western hills, the foe withdrew a short distance, for the purpose of devising new modes of attack. The respite came most seasonably to the scouts, who had bravely kept their position, and boldly maintained the unequal fight from the middle of the day.

Now, for the first time, was the girl missing—and the scouts supposed that through terror, she had escaped to her former captors, or that she had been killed in the fight. They were not left long in doubt, for in a few moments the girl was seen emerging from behind a rock, and coming to them with a rifle in her hand. During the heat of the fight, she saw a warrior fall, who had advanced some fifty yards before the main body in front. She at once resolved to possess herself of his rifle, and crouching in the undergrowth, she crept to the spot, and succeeded in her enterprise, being all the time exposed to the cross fire of the defenders and assailants. Her practiced eye had early noticed the fatal rock, and hers was the mysterious hand by which the two warriors had fallen—the last being the most wary, untiring and blood-thirsty brave of the Shawanese tribe. He it was, who, ten years previous, had scalped the family of the girl, and been her captor.

In the west, dark clouds were now gathering, and in an hour the whole heavens were shrouded in them; this darkness greatly embarrassed the scouts in their contemplated night retreat, for they might readily lose their way, or accidentally fall on the enemy—this being highly probable, if not inevitable. An hour's consultation decided their plans, and it was agreed that the girl, from her intimate knowledge of their localities, should lead the advance a few steps. Another advantage might be gained by this arrangement; for in case they should fall in with some out-post, the girl's knowledge of the Indian tongue would perhaps enable her to deceive the sentinel; and so the sequel proved, for scarcely had they descended one hundred feet, when a low "whist" from the girl, warned them of present danger. The scouts sunk silently to the earth, where, by previous arrangements, they were to remain until another signal was given them by the girl, whose absecnce for more than a quarter of an hour now began to excite the most serious apprehensions. At length she again appeared, and told them that she had removed two sentinels who were directly in their route, to a point some hundred feet distant. The descent was noiselessly resumed—the level gained, and the scouts followed their intrepid pioneer for half a mile in the most profound silence, when the barking of a small dog, within a few feet, apprised them of a new danger. The almost simultaneous click of the scouts' rifles was heard by the girl, who rapidly approached them, and stated that they were now in the midst of the Indians' wigwams, and their lives depended on the most profound silence, and implicitly following her footsteps. A moment afterwards, the girl was accosted by a squaw from an opening in a wigwam. She replied in the Indian language, and without stopping, pressed forward. In a short time she stopped, and assured the scouts that the village was cleared, and that they were now in safety. She knew that every pass leading out of the prairie was safely guarded by Indians, and at once resolved to adopt the bold adventure of passing them through the very centre of their village, as the least hazardous. The result proved the correctness of her judgment. They now kept a course for the Ohio, being guided by the Hockhocking River—and after three days' march of suffering, the party arrived at the block-house in safety. Their escape from the Indians, prevented the contemplated attack; and the rescued girl proved to be the sister of the intrepid Neil Washburn, celebrated in Indian history as the renowned scout to Capt. Kenton's bloody Kentuckians.

Miscellany.

ILK NIGHT AT MITHER'S KNEE.

Ha'e you forgot, now we ha'e bairns,
When you and I were lass and lad,
How, i' our snawy night-dress clad,
We knelt ilk night at mither's knee!

We tauld her a' our barnheid fau'ts,
An' then she faulded ilk plump palm,
An' as we prayed, like Sabbath calm
It seemed, to kneel at mither's knee.

Ha'e you forgot, though long ago,
Her han' sae sweet on ilka head!
What wad we gie, when our hearts bleed,
To kneel agen at mither's knee!

I kenna what the warld may ha'e,
What halie spot my fit may climb,
I doubt if ane is more sublime,
Than that, ilk night, at mither's knee.

Amang the bluid-bought anes aboon,
When you an' I at last shall stan',
'Twill be because o' that sweet han',
Ilk night we knelt at mither's knee.

GANDER PULLING.

Christmas in the Backwoods of Alabama—An Ex-Preacher as Bartender and Master of Ceremonies.

NEWTON, ALA., December 28, 1878.

I rode along the public road toward a country grocery situated at the forks of two roads, in what is popularly called by politicians the "wiregrass" section of Alabama. I had been duly invited by an ex-parson, who kept the grocery and dispensed "tough leg" and "old Robinson County" whiskeys to the tipplers of the neighborhood, to attend a rare revival of a pastime once prominent in the sport of North Carolina 100 years ago—a "gander pulling." His invitation ran as follows:

MY DEARLY BELOVED SUR:—Thou art respectfully invited to attend an ancestral gander pullin' at my premises on the 25th inst., etc.

That expression, "ancestral gander pullin'" struck me, and when I was assured by a neighbor that they would have a "rale riproaring time," I concluded to go.

As a "solitary horseman," I wended my way toward the scene of this queer celebration of the birth of the Man of Nazareth. Upon my arrival, about 11 o'clock in the forenoon, I found a crowd of some fifty gathered around a blazing fire of pine knots in front of the groggery and scattered over the premises. One notable peculiarity obtruding itself *propria vigore* was the way they disposed of their hands. They either whittled or left their hands to repose with sublime placidity deep down in the profound mysteries of their trousers pockets. When I approached the group around the pine knots, a score of voices greeted me with:

'Hello, Squire, come to pull the gander?' "Come up and warm," "Give a fellow your paw," and the like, followed by a handshaking as universal as Kearney's denunciation of the "bloated bondholder," each one followed by a plunge of the hand back into the profound depth of the pantaloons pocket. The air was damp, heavy and chilly. And the wind drove the black, soot-laden smoke from the knots in eddying puffs in all directions, and it drifted heavily away among the pine boughs. From all directions citizens were coming in, all on horseback, and after hitching to the trees and saplings in the vicinity, "corned up" at the bar, and gathering about the fire, discussed the chances of the "pullin'," as they called it. Old men, young men and boys, white and black, were there, and all seemed absorbed in this one great question, and for the time forgot their hands, which reposed safely in their deepest pockets.

Passing into the bar-room I was in the presence of the functionary of the place and the occasion. The room was a rude affair, being the smallest of single pine log huts, clapboards on top, cracks ceiled with the same, a rude fire-place, in which a pile of knots blazed and roared; a box at the other end, and behind this place of devotion—a kind of second altar as it were—stood the ex-preacher in the role of bartender. He was a tall, lank, doxology-looking individual, with a small wisp of grayish whiskers three inches in length hanging downward from the point of a chin belonging to an otherwise clean-shaven face of more than usual solemnity. Two dead oyster-looking eyes martyred the feeble glimmer of animation struggling for existence along the outline of an aquiline nose, while his mouth, with dropping corners, seemed to be chief mourner at the funeral, and was always asking pardon for presuming even that much. His hair was long, and on this damp day hung dank and stringy behind his ears. When I entered he was leaning on the counter, his chin resting in both hands, while he elaborated on the rules of the "pullin'," to half a dozen contestants, most of whom were seated upon empty barrels, tobacco and cracker boxes. Of course I was welcomed, and then he went on with his talk about the "rules" of the day, which he had framed in his own style. As the "rules" are worthy of production here, I sandwich them in between the comments of the ex-parson:

"My dear friends, a gander's head is offal hard to fetch," he said, "and the feller what gits it will yearn what he gits; but I don't say this to discourage any of you. I want you all to pull and show your spunk. It will add to the success of the pullin' to have you all in it. You want to hear the rules? Well, here they are:

1. Thou shalst not pull at the gander till thou hast pade a quarter a piece.
2. Thou shalst ride each his own hoss and each one for hisself.
3. Thou shalst not pull at the gander if thy hoss is not in a gallop.
4. Thou shalst have five pulls at the gander for one quarter.
5. If thou pullest off the hed of said gander, thou shalt have $2 50 for a quarter chance, and $5 for two chances.
6. The hed of said gander shall be greased.

"Now these is the rules to conduct this pullin'. It makes one feel young agin to be at a gander pullin'. It reminds me of my early days in old North Car'liny. Them was good days. We pulled every Christmas, and sometimes on Fourth of July; but all them things fadeth away, as the Psalmist says, like the grass that groweth up and is cut down. Ah, my friends, we only sees such times once in this vale of tears."

He was boring for a tear, and got it. He struck water—or whiskey. Anyway, it was a tear.

These "rules" are an exact copy of the original sheet taken by me under pretence of a desire to introduce them at the first "pullin" I got up.

Near the groggery was an old field from around which the fence had been removed, and thither the "congregation," as the ex-preacher styled the crowd, repaired, at 12, to indulge in this novel pastime. A fork had been set in the ground, into which a long pole had been placed, one end of which was nailed to a stump, and the other projected about thirty degrees above the horizon and many feet beyond the fork. This end was smaller than the other, and limber, and hung about five feet above the head of a man on horseback. As all were eager for the sport, an antiquated gander was immediately swung to the limber end of the pole by the feet, head downward, his neck well "greased," and presented a job apparently as tough as a United States Treasury report. A Judge, armed with a whip, with which to accelerate the speed of any horse which was too slow, took his stand near the gander, who, for the first time in his life, was to be truly dramatic, and blend with his "Quack! quack!" the glamour of martyrdom.

The ex-parson, who was master of ceremonies, read out the "rules," the list of contestants, cast lots for position, and formed them in a row, one behind another. He again read the "rules" to the motley throng, among whom was a son of "Afric's sunny clime," mounted upon a lineal descendant of Balaam's ass. Many rough jokes flew back and forth, and Peter came in for a goodly share, to which he only grinned, and exhibited a hand whose grip was too well known in the neighborhood not to be regarded as a formidable rival for the honor of the decapitation. Fourteen were in line, headed by a lank, red-headed ex-candidate for Sheriff, mounted upon a gaunt and spiteful sorrel mare. His stirrups were at least four inches too short, and hence his knees poked out to the front with painful angularity, while between the tops of his socks—now down over the quarters of his shoes—and the hem of his yellow jeans pants elapsed a space of bare, bluish-red shin gleaming bleakly in the raw wind. As one of the bystanders remarked, he "rode deep;" that is, he sat considerably on the small of his back. All such comments, and they were numerous, had no effect upon the bland smile of unapproachable superiority that dwelt kindly but patronizingly upon those plebians who were not in the pulling. The balance of the contestants were of the usual backwoods cut, and were as variously mounted as they were themselves unique in character.

The programme was to dash under the descendant of the savior of Rome and snatch for the head. If one missed from any cause, it was his loss. The neck of the gander was already "greased," and the "trouble began." The ex-candidate came first upon the fiery sorrel. Starting some fifty yards from the judge, she came tearing along at a scattering half speed. Just as her rider was preparing his hand for the grab, the gander gave a tremendous "quack" and a flutter, the judge's whip fell across the sorrel's rump with a cruel hiss, she shied clear of the point, and dashed away across the field, and was taken up by the ex candidate 300 yards away. A yell arose from the crowd as the mare dashed away, followed by another, when a fat fellow upon a large flea-bitten gray made his grab full five feet beyond the gander's head. The "celebration" was now fully opened. Rider after rider dashed by, the judge's whip hissing unmercifully as it swung through the air down upon the horses' rumps, and the head was not yet touched, when Peter came in to close the "first drawing." He put spurs to the ass, and the judge, meeting him full half way, plied the whip; but the ass was true to his original opinion, that it was quite undignified and improper for one who could trace his lineage back through a long line of solemn ancestors to the days of David, King of Israel, to get out of a condensed pace, and just as Peter was making a covetous and murderous grab at the devoted, but yet triumphant head, the judge, red in the face from his exertions, yelled out:

"Don't pull; I rule you out. Your ass goes too slow."

This was received with a roar of laughter, and an offer from a red-eyed fellow, with a bottle in his side pocket, to give three cheers for the ass, as soon as a committee on refined distinctions could report which of the three was the ass. Another roar of laughter followed this cut.

The "first drawing" had taken place, and was as fruitless as the drawings in a flash lottery—no one had touched the head. The ex-preacher and master of ceremonies had provided a huge jug of "tangle-leg," and as the "pullers" returned, they rallied around this attractive object. While this was going on, outsiders gathered in groups, and numerous flasks were fished up from the cavernous depths of as many pockets, and twinkled in the air over the red noses of many loyal sons of this free and glorious Republic. All was hilarious joy and bright expectation, rose-hued and gander-born, for nearly every one had bet on the gander's head. The betting was brisk, and the ex-candidate sold the highest in these rude and informal pools. Many drinks depended on his grip.

The procession was formed a second time, and the fiery sorrel bore down the track again in splendid style, while the gander hung quietly and serenely, evidently filled with an indifference and contempt for the impending danger born of the ignominious and signal failure of the first drawing; but his serenity was ill-timed, and the bony digits of the ex-candidate grappled around his neck and slid away, thanks to the "grease," with a spirit more reckless of the gander's comfort than was to be expected from one who had lately shook hands as a soft and purring candidate near on to 72,000 times. The jerk gave the pole a swing, and the gander went bobbing back and forth, up and down and around, fluttering and squalling. Close on behind the sorrel came the flea-bitten gray, which, not being accustomed to such fluttering overhead, shied as the fat fellow reached aloft for the head. The girth broke, and down he came upon the ground with a heavy thump, the gray's heels flying in the air among human legs. Another cheer arose from the crowd, and as he picked himself up, his flying gray disappeared among the pines in the direction of his home. One chap, with mingled solemnity and mock eagerness, rushed up to the unhorsed knight with:

"I am so glad, Jim, you got the head; let us see it."

A square blow from Jim's hard knuckles, planted full upon the solemn "fiz," laid the curious chap in the grass, and his part of the fun ended there and then. That was his last joke. He afterward said he did not include that among his jokes.

The others went through, several touching the head, and when they assembled for the "third drawing," the gander hung limp from the end of the pole. He was dead. The excitement reached a fever heat about this time. Drinks were passed around while they were forming, and a hushed expectancy hung over the crowd as the sorrel went down the track again. A violent wrench at the head threw the ex-candidate from the saddle upon the mare's crupper, but the head held on. Two or three more jerks followed, when a beardless youth of twenty grasped the neck, threw himself forward on the horse's neck, and the body of the gander hung headless from the pole. A shout from the crowd told the contestants, who were taking up their horses out in the field, that some one had won the prize. A crowd soon gathered around young Bazeman, the successful "puller," who still held the head of the gander in his hand, and all seemed greatly excited.

The ex-parson pushed his way into the crowd, and mounting a stump, said:

"My dearly beloved friends, thou perceivest that Si. Bazeman hast severed the head of the gander, and by the rules he is entitled to $2,50, which I now hand him in your presence. Permit me to congratulate him on his success, and all the other pullers, on their high moral deportment, and to wish them all good luck. This congregation and the public is now dismissed."—*New York Herald.*

TO MY WIFE.

Thy cheek is pale with many cares,
Thy brow is overcast;
And thy fair face a shadow wears,
That tells of sorrow past;
But hath thy tongue kind words for me;
How dark soe'er my journey be,
I turn for comfort, love, to thee,
My beautiful, my wife!

Thy gentle eyes are not so bright
As when I wooed thee first,
Yet still they have the same sweet light,
Which long my heart hath nursed;
They have the same enchanting beam,
Which charmed me in love's early dream,
And still with joy on me they stream,
My beautiful, my wife!

When all without looks dark and cold,
And voices change their tone,
Nor greet me as they did of old,
I feel I'm not alone;
For thou, my love, art aye the same,
And looks and deeds thy faith proclaim;
Though all should scorn, thou wouldst not blame,
My beautiful, my wife!

A shadow comes across my heart,
And overclouds my fate,
Whene'er I think thou may'st depart,
And leave me desolate;
For, as the wretch who treads alone
Some gloomy path, in wilds unknown,
Such should I be, if thou wert gone,
My beautiful, my wife!

If thou wert dead, the flow'rs might spring,
But I should heed them not;
The merry birds might soar and sing,
They could not cheer my lot;
Before me dark despair would rise,
And spread a pall o'er earth and skies,
If shone no more thy loving eyes,
My beautiful, my wife!

And those dear eyes have shone thro' tears,
But never looked unkind;
For shattered hopes and troubled years
Still closer seem to bind
Thy pure and trusting heart to mine;
Not for thyself did'st thou repine,
But all thy husband's grief was thine,
My beautiful, my wife!

When at the eventide I see
My children throng around,
And know the love of them, and thee,
My spirit still is bound
To earth, despite of every care;
I feel my soul can do and dare,
So long as thou my lot doth share,
My beautiful, my wife!

HAMILTON FISH.

An Evening's Talk on Men of the Past and Present—How Mr. Fish Became Secretary of State—His Estimate of Grant as a Statesman and a Gentleman—Grant Wants no Third Term—Caleb Cushing and His Services—Fish's Estimate of Blaine.

The better part of a page of a recent New York *Tribune* was filled with an account of an evening's conversation with Hamilton Fish. Reminiscences of men and measures extending back a long time are given, and many incidents in recent history are commented upon. Concerning the circumstances that led to his appointment as Secretary of State, Mr. Fish said:—

"Grant came to West Point soon after the war, and stopped at the Post Hotel. My country house is on the opposite side of the river, and having been acquainted with Grant pretty well, I asked him to come over with his family—his son Fred was among those who knew my boys—and make his quarters with me. We gave him a carriage, and let him go where he liked. I remember saying to Mrs. Grant on one occasion: 'You will have a big house yet. They will make you mistress of the White House in a few years.' Mrs. Grant is a very good woman, so perfectly sincere that she is not prompt at mere repartee. She said to me: 'Then, if I ever get there, I shall expect you to come to the inauguration.' I said, in a laughing way, that I would do so. When Grant was elected, Mrs. Grant reminded me of my promise.

"Just before Grant's inauguration, a movement was started by A. T. Stewart and others, to raise a sum of money for a homestead and present to General Sherman. A meeting was called, and a notice sent to me. I thought it was right to do something for Sherman, and I went there. When I arrived in Washington, the Grant family insisted upon my coming to their house. I saw the inauguration, and came back home. A few days passed, when I received a letter from President Grant. It was mailed in the regular way, and offered me the position of Secretary of State, and pressed me to take it, and desired me to respond by telegraph, as it was important to his plans. I sat down at once and wrote a letter, telling the General that it was absolutely out of the question, that I could not leave New York and my interests, and had ceased to have the ambition and methods of a public man. In those days we did not have Tom James for postmaster, and I had often noticed that if you mailed a letter at one of the up town boxes as late two o'clock in the afternoon, it seldom got into the evening mail for Washington. My wife was sick, and had not been out of her room for some time. I therefore sent for her coupe, which had probably never been as far down town as the post-office before, and there I drove, only stopping on the way at the Everett House to send a telegraphic dispatch. I waited at the Everett House until I had notification that my dispatch had been received in Washington. I said: 'Your proposition cannot be accepted. It is absolutely out of the question.' I then continued to the post-office, and mailed the letter.

"When I returned toward up-town," continued Governor Fish, "my mind seemed to want a little rest at such a disturbance of my mode of life and pulsation, and I told the driver to go to the park, and keep on until I arrested him. I remember taking Grant's letter in my hand, and saying to myself: "At any rate, this is something to keep. Perhaps my children or grandchildren, reading it some day among my papers, may not think I was such a stupid old fellow, when I was chosen to be the head of the State department under the great General of the war.' In reminiscences, political, legal, and otherwise, I was driven almost to High Bridge. I returned to my house in time to dine at half past five. Walking to my wife's room, I found her in an excited condition. She said; 'Here is a despatch, announcing that you have been nominated and confirmed Secretary of State at Washington.' She was about coming down stairs, at hearing me enter. We went back into her room, and talked the matter over there, and we both agreed that under no circumstances was the place to be accepted. I was then sixty years of age, and had received far more than my share of public offices. The fires of ambition, if they ever burned high in me, were dissipated. Not even the feeling of duty called me to accept this place. My wife said: 'There are half a dozen telegraphic dispatches down stairs for you.' I went down stairs, and found that General Grant had telegraphed to me: 'Don't say to anybody that you decline the office. Await a private letter, which I will send you by messenger.' A dispatch of the same purport from Washburne. I said then: 'I will wait until Grant gets my letter, and knows my feelings and views, and until he does so, I will not open my mouth about this office.'

"The world worships a rising star. I think I had more friends that night than I have ever had since. The news was in the evening papers, and my door-bell began to ring before seven o'clock; and we had these rooms pretty well filled with callers. I heard all their congratulations, laughingly or gravely, and said nothing one way or the other about taking the office.

"The next day, General Babcock arrived here, with a letter from the President. I opened the letter in this room, in Babcock's presence, and read it through, and said to him: 'General, this is out of the question, and I have made up my mind upon it.' Babcock began an argument, and finally said to me: 'Mr. Fish, the President has empowered me to give you a private reason why he wants you to take that office, and greatly relieve him.' Babcock then told me something, which is still a private matter. What it was, at any rate made me serious, and awakened the instinct of duty, up to that time latent. I said to him: 'I will consult one before whom I always lay all things of importance before acting—my wife.' I went up stairs, and asked Mrs. Fish to go down with me. She sat where you are sitting now, and I in my place, and General Babcock over here on the other side of the fire. I asked Mrs. Fish to give General Babcock her views in her own way. She said that we could not accept the place. We could not live in Washington City. That she and I had talked it over fully, and were voluntarily of the same opinion. I then told General Babcock to repeat to Mrs. Fish the private argument which he had given me, arousing my ideas of duty, and I then left the case to my wife. She said to me: 'You must take it.' Going to Washington was breaking up my plans and routine, and I firmly determined to stay there but a few weeks, and relieve Grant, and help to straighten his affairs, and then go home. I had no house in Washington, but in a little while thought I would give the appearance of stability to my tenure, by taking one. I took Gov. Morgan's house, and thought to myself: 'My successor will take it from me any way, and relieve me of the rent.' I told General Grant that at the latest I would only stay until autumn. But in a little while, the resignations and removals from that Cabinet were so numerous that I said to myself: 'It would not be honorable for me to run away from Grant, too. This administration presents to the spectator, perhaps, failure on the threshold. There have been two Secretaries of State, two Secretaries of the Navy, two of the Treasury; seven or eight resignations within a quarter. If this state of things goes on, the government will give and get into a panic.' I then resolved to stay with Grant, at least until things were moving on with confidence. And there I stayed eight years, wishing to go home all the time."

The question was asked Mr. Fish: "What estimate of Grant is left on your mind, after that long experience of eight years?"

"Grant," said his former Prime Minister, "is under estimated in this country. He is not only a man of ability and firmness in character, and of unwavering patriotism, but I never knew any man more generous in his judgments, more open to conviction, and who loved so little his own opinion, when it was shown to conflict with the public interests. There were times that you had to make him see that he was wrong, and do it by argument. But I have known him to change his views, on both personal and political things, when he had entertained them with the greatest stubborness. There were some things which the President saw differently from my view. Our intercourse, however, was never ruffled by ill-temper. I found before I went into his Cabinet that he was a man who meant to serve the country and not himself alone, and I addressed myself at times to that latent element in his nature. I have said to him: 'General, you will not think to-morrow on this question as you do to-day—I don't believe you will.' He never repelled discussion, and listened to every point advanced, even in favor of men he did not like."

Further along, this conversation is reported:

"From what I hear and read, Mr. Fish, Grant has spoken well of President Hayes."

"He has, and writes kindly of him, too. Several of my letters from General Grant bear reference to this administration. Not long ago, General Grant wrote me a very philosophical letter, concerning the difficulties and troubles that Mr. Hayes would have to encounter, and expressed his warmest wishes for the President's success."

"Is it not well, after all, Mr. Fish, that we have a rather negative administration, to give the country a rest for the next two or three or four years?"

"Probably it is. I suppose this administration may be compared to Monroe's. His eight years were regarded as rather flat. There was no point about them. He did one significant thing, however—he put in our foreign policy the Monroe doctrine."

"You had a good deal to do with the maintenance of that?"

"Yes; but this administration has not maintained it. They have allowed European governments to sell and buy islands in the West Indies. I don't think Mr. Evarts should have allowed that to be done without speaking out. I wouldn't."

"I forgot to ask you, Mr. Fish, what you think of the next Presidential election."

"You mean the Republican nomination? If the convention were held to-day, General Grant would be nominated. There are nearly two years to come, before the convention, and many changes may happen. I can say to you," said the Secretary, "that General Grant does not want to run again. He has no connection with the movement among the people in his favor."

During the ramifications of the conversation, this question was asked:—

"Did you find the late Caleb Cushing a useful auxiliary when you were Secretary?"

"Highly so. His information was extensive, his experience great, and he was a cheerful worker for the government."

"Supposing he had been confirmed as Chief Justice, would he have been distinguished in that place?"

"He would have made a capital Chief Justice! There would not have one element of the partisan about him, and he would have been a pure judge. I think that the public underestimated him. It was said that he had no convictions. I know that he had convictions, and very strong ones. He believed in government, as I do. Mr. Cushing believed that this was a government where the majority ruled, and that having expressed its will, any person was bound to labor in the government, no matter what his party. If you keep that in mind, you can see the consistency of Mr. Cushing's life. To the public, however, he appeared to be jumping about from party to party, and generally in order to take place. Yet, however employed by the government, the work was well done. Being sent to China by John Tyler, he made that splendid treaty, the first made by that government with a Christian power."

The Secretary hesitated here, after a question, and then said that to the best of his belief, Cushing's was the first treaty China had with a Christian power. He added that a man who could go into a vast closed empire like that, and conclude such a treaty, was no common person.

"Next," said Mr. Fish, "as Attorney General for Frank Pierce, Cushing delivered some of the ablest opinions ever given. They have been celebrated since as models of law and of statement. He also served under President Jonnson, in Colombia, and made a treaty there which the Senate has never taken up. His services at the Geneva Convention and at Madrid, were up to the standard of his previous work."

Speaking of Henry Clay, Mr. Fish said:—

"I think that James G. Blaine has a good deal of the style and magnetism of Henry Clay. There is an enthusiasm for him in almost every section and neighborhood, that cannot be repressed. He is quick, decisive, and sharp in his parliamentary work, like Clay. His address and smile and graciousness are a good deal on Clay's plan."

Before the conclusion of the conversation, General Grant's name was once more mentioned:—

"I desire to ask you, Mr. Fish, if the current criticisms on General Grant's manners and gentility is founded on anything real?"

"Grant was innately a gentleman. If you were to place him in a certain circle of society people, such as exists in some of the exclusive parts of this city, it might be said there that he had too little manner, and did not dance nor flatter, nor play the elegant creature as well as he might. That is the view some hold of a gentleman. But when you come to the natural graces of the heart, kindness and thoughtfulness, an ingenuous and open spirit, respect for good women and truthful men, there was about him all of that which makes the man. Many of his critics, more fastidious, might have learned from him that imputation is no part of a gentleman. I repeat that he is underestimated. I have in my mind a range of nearly half a century of public men whom I knew: he has as much of my respect as any of them."

PULLING DOWN WILLIAM TELL'S CHAPEL.—The government of Uri proposes to perpetrate an act of vandalism which ought to be prevented. They have resolved to pull down William Tell's chapel, on the Lake of Lucerne, and, not content with the demolition of this interesting and romantic, if not precisely historic, building, they have actually refused permission to the Lucerne Artistic Society to detach the paintings on the walls, in order that they may be placed in the Museum of Lucerne. The French artist M. Meissonnier has expressed the opinion that these paintings possess a high artistic as well as historic value, and it is to be hoped that the rulers of Uri may even yet be prevailed upon to reconsider their incomprehensible resolution to destroy all trace of so interesting a relic, around which are intertwined so many of the poetic and legendary associations of the forest cantons.—*London Times.*

NOTHING was made in vein, except blood.

WASHINGTON, SOLDIER AND STATESMAN.

BY JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

What figure more immovably august
Than that grave strength, so patient and so pure,
Calm in good fortune, when it wavered, sure,
That soul serene, impenetrably just,
Modelled on classic lines so simple they endure!
That soul, so softly radiant and so white,
The track it left seems less of fire than light,
Cold but to such as love distemperature?
And if pure light, as some deem, be the force
That drives rejoicing planets on their course,
Why for his power benign seek an impurer source?
His was the true enthusiasm that burns long,
Domestically bright,
Fed from itself, and shy of human sight,
The hidden force that makes a life-time strong,
And not the short-lived fuel of a song.
Passionless, say you? What is passion for,
But to sublime our natures, and control
To front heroic toils with late return,
Or none, or such as shames the conqueror?
That fire was fed with substance of the soul,
And not with holiday stubble, that could burn
Through seven slow years of unadvancing war,
Equal when fields were lost and fields were won,
With breath of popular applause or blame,
Nor fanned nor damped, unquenchably the same,
Too inward to be reached by flaws of idle fame.

Soldier and statesman, rarest unison;
High-poised example of great duties done
Simply as breathing, a world's honor worn
As life's indifferent gifts to all men born;
Dumb for himself, unless it were to God,
But for his barefoot soldiers eloquent,
Tramping the snow to coral where they trod,
Held by his awe in hollow-eyed content;
Modest, yet firm as Nature's self; unblamed
Save by the men his noble temper shamed;
Not honored then or now because he wooed
The popular voice, but that he still withstood;
Broad-minded, higher-souled, there is but one
Who was all this, and ours, and all men's—Washington.

THE HEAVENS IN FEBRUARY.

The Brightest Stars and Planets Visible—Occultations of the Moon.

Every one who has watched the heavens during January, has noticed a gradual shifting of the stars toward the West. Constellations which at the commencement of darkness in the beginning of the month were at an elevation of one third the distance from the western horizon to the point overhead are no longer seen, while others which at the same period were invisible have come into view in the East. This movement of the heavens in a western direction is caused by the revolution of the earth around the sun toward the eastern point of the horizon.

The sun, though situated at a distance of rather more than ninety-one millions of miles, is yet comparatively so near that the advance of the earth in its orbit causes the central luminary to appear in different parts of the heavens, while the stars are at such immense distances that even a change of position equal to double the interval between the earth and the sun makes no perceptible variation in their apparent place. Day and night are due to the proportions of the earth being turned by its diurnal revolution towards or from the sun, and the increasing or decreasing length of the day causes the stars to be seen in a different position when night renders them visible.

About the middle of February Aries, which is usually considered the first constellation of the zodiac, or of those along the apparent path of the sun among the stars, will be near the Western horizon. Aldebaran, a red star in Taurus, and one of the Hyades, at ten o'clock, will be about forty-five degrees high, while Castor and Pollux, in Gemini, will be near the meridian or great circle passing north and south through the zenith or point overhead. Regulus, in Leo, will be about twenty-five degrees from the meridian, and Spica, the bright star in Virgo, and like Pollux, Aldebaran and Regulus, one of those from which the moon's distance is measured, will just appear in the East. Sirius, "leader of the starry host," will be a little past the meridian; Betelguex and Rigel in Orion, about forty degrees high. Arcturus, in the constellation Bootes, the brightest star visible during the summer months, will be a short distance above the Eastern horizon. Perseus will be rather down in the northwest, and Berenice's Hair, conspicuous in the north-east by east, and Capella about sixty degrees high.

As the stars rise an hour earlier every fortnight, their positions at the same time of night vary in that period fifteen degrees, or one-sixth of the distance from the meridian to the horizon. It is therefore only approximately that the place of the brightest stars can be given during a whole month.

Of the planets visible without the aid of a telescope, Mercury will be too near to the sun to be observed. Venus will continue to be the evening star, setting each night at a later period and increasing in brightness. Mars will rise about an hour before the sun on the ninth, and be visible a little earlier every morning the remainder of the month. This planet will be in opposition to the sun the second week in November. At such times it is nearest to the earth, and shines with the greatest brilliancy. Jupiter will cease to be the evening star after the seventh of the month, and on the fifteenth will rise a few minutes before the sun, and continue to be morning star until the close of August. Saturn is approaching its conjunction with the sun. It will set at the beginning of the month a little after nine o'clock, and may be noticed as a palish star in the southwest. Uranus, which may be observed by a practiced eye, shining with a faint blue light, will rise about sunset, the middle of the month. It will be near to the waning moon on the 26th, and will be visible the whole night. As this planet makes but one revolution around the sun while the earth makes eighty-four, it appears during seven years to rise and set in the same constellation.

Two occultations of stars by the moon will take place in February—one of a star of the fifth magnitude in Scorpio on the evening of the 10th, and another of a small star in Taurus about an hour and a half after sunset, on the 28th. The moon will be too near full for the first occultation to be viewed with advantage; the disappearance of the last may be observed at the dark edge of the planet.

The nightly sky during February will be adorned my many of the most beautiful constellations. Stars which have been carefully observed from the days of the shepherd astronomers of Chaldea to the present time, will be visible during the whole or the greater part of every night. Although a majority of the most conspicuous stars are colorless, there are some which present a different aspect. Capella emits an orange, Aldebaran a red, Arcturus a yellow, and Vega a blue light. Sirius, which now appears white, except in certain conditions of the atmosphere, when it has a slightly bluish tinge, was regarded by the ancients as a red star, and is so called by Ptolemy and Seneca. When it is recollected that each of the colored stars is a sun, which properly gives light and heat to opaque bodies like the earth, imagination fails to picture the hues of a landscape or the tints of the sky on a planet illuminated by a red, a blue or a yellow sun. It is also equally at fault in assigning plausible causes for the variation in the color of those "suns of other systems," from the appearance of the central luminary around which the earth makes its annual circuit in its progress through space.—*Philadelphia Times, 3d.*

AN EARLY GREENBACK.—We do not know how much truth there is in the floating rumor that one of the earliest pieces of paper money ever made in this country was the work of Franklin's press. It was printed in 1764, and represented three pence. In size it was three inches by two, and had the superscription: "Three pence, 73,319. Three pence. This bill shall pass current for three pence, within the Province of Pennsylvania, according to an Act of Assembly made in 4th year of King George III. Dated the 18th day of June, 1764. Three pence. J. W. Wharton." In the lower left-hand corner, were the English coat-of-arms. Copies of this curious relic of greenbackism are very rare—if, indeed, this one be not the only copy known. It is owned in Philadelphia, and was found in Chester several years ago by some workmen, who were examining the interior of an underground vault.

A MAN at Vandalia, Ills., has taken out a writ to replevin his arm, which is in the possession of the doctor who amputated it. He desires to introduce it in evidence in an action to recover damages for alleged malpractice.