New Orleans Daily Crescent.

MONDAY MORNING, APRIL 28, 1866.

[For the Crescent.]

The Prisoned Bird.

BY ELLIS AMMONETTE.

Thou mock-bird, with the tuneful throat,
Whose cage hangs on my neighbor's wall,
How can'st thou sound thy silver note,
From day's grey dawn, till twilight's fall—
And even witch the ear of night,
With melody most rare,
While thus thou'rt held in captive plight?

While listening to thy varied lay,
Thou mimic of the feathered tribe,
I call thee mottley, plumed fay,
And fancy thou the world would'st bribe,
To one long dance and frolic mad,
By thy wild piping tone,
Which rings all changes gay and glad.

But when thy song leaps shrillest forth,
And e'en caprice would seem must fail,
To furnish such quaint notes of mirth—
Sudden thou pour'st a piteous wail,
As born of anguish long restrained,
Which thou wouldst fain forget,
And thus to tell had still refrained.

Low, passionate, and sadly sweet,
It has indeed "a dying fall,"
With tragic melody replete,
Which seems, on hope that's fled, to call;
And woo it back with syren strain—
Knowing that hope is dead,
And never more can come again!

Is it fond memory of thy mate,
That lends thy woe a keener thrill,
Whose song thou'st heard with pride elate
Swell high in many a cadenced trill?
Or is the burden of thy lay,
For liberty to spread
Thy buoyant wing and speed away?

Which e'er it is, poor prisoned bird,
If in my hands thy fate were cast,
I'm sure that when thy lay was heard
I would not hold thee bound so fast,
But quick should ope the cruel door,
That bars thee from thy wilds,
And speed thee there thy song to pour!

[For the Crescent.

Down South;

—OR—

A NORTHERN TELEGRAPHER'S ADVENTURES IN NEW ORLEANS.

Reader, have you ever felt the thrill of horror which attends the recollection of a narrow escape from death? Have you walked, unwittingly walked, to the edge of some precipice, and, when another step would have plunged you over its fearful brink, discovered the danger just in time to avoid it? Have you seen the gleam of steel pointed at your breast, or felt the muzzle of a relentless firearm touch your forehead, and by some miracle, escaped a further acquaintance? If so, you can sympathize with me in my narrative of an escape from a fate as terrible as any of these. Even as I write a cold shudder seizes my frame, and the little courage I possess becomes paralyzed by the recollection.

I have been endeavoring to persuade myself for some years past that I was courageous, but there are so many idiosyncracies in my character, that it is difficult to define any trait distinctly. Sometimes I feel brave—for instance when I am alone in my song chamber, reading of some hero. Nay, I pace to and fro, surveying my dogged attitudes in the mirror, and convulsively clutching the empty pistol at my side. Imagination conjures up scenes of combat in which I am a hero. For hours I delight in the sensations of self-appraisement. I hear the applauding voice of men, feel the warmth of victorious blood coursing through my veins, and imagine that my female friends are breathing my name in musical tones of love and admiration.

But I don't fall asleep under the influence of these feelings. Oh, no! When the time arrives for putting out the lights, I confess I feel lonely and helpless. Often I let the candle burn out; always look under the bed; and then pray for sleep, half smothered in the bed clothes.

I wonder if I am a coward. A disturbance in the street makes me tremble until my teeth chatter. Should it be a fight, my first care is to secure a position free from danger. Despite all my assumption of indifference when others are near, I feel "pale" and frightened. Some men don't fear entanglement in these fights—they seem to enjoy it; and if a pugilistic looking individual was to assure me that the moon was made of cheese, at such a moment I verily believe I should not assent.

I dislike crowds. If there is a fire, my standpoint of observation is generally just far enough away to avoid the disturbances of the scene, and just near enough to catch a safe glimpse of the fire. Once I was so intimidated; I stood in a distant street, watching the topmost flames of a conflagration, afraid to venture nearer the shouts and confusion of the mass. I confess all this, and yet I cannot think it cowardice. After all, these precautionary measures are only the result of a natural cautiousness. No man should run away; but, if danger really threatens, and he can avoid it without actually running away, is it not the safe policy? If he is hemmed in, then death or victory. Providing I was placed in this desperate position, I believe I should prove a fearful antagonist. It is an unpleasant thing to have to appear brave when you don't feel so. You feel dry about the throat, expectorate when you don't want to, and want to expectorate when you can't. Whenever one comes ingloriously out of a disturbance, too, it is annoying to find how much has been omitted in retaliatory speech, and how easily the victory might have been gained by the exercise of a little more courage.

Not long ago I was offered a commercial position at New Orleans. In my Northern home of peace and comfort I had often heard of the ravages which climatic diseases make there, and of the proud, passionate temper of the people, resulting in encounters, in which the knife or firearm took a conspicuous part. Death in any shape is a fearful contemplation with me, but to die so far away of a pestilential disease is horrible, and it is still more horrible to die by the knife or bullet, the very sight of which produces in me feelings of horror.

However, my best alternative was to go, and thither I went. I found my business companions a peculiar race, mostly Southerners. There was a ferociousness about their features which I did not like. It was soon evident they had not recovered from the fierce hatred of the Northman which the late war had engendered, and they did not strive to conceal it. Every imprecation against my countrymen made me tremble, so that before I had been there many days I wished myself safe at home.

There was one gentleman, Mr. Flick, somewhat more genial than the rest, and with him I determined to open acquaintance. After giving me an introductory survey, which commenced with my hat and ended with my boots, (and comprehended, I believe, every article of my attire, especially my gold watch-chain,) he consented to accompany me in a search for apartments. During our peregrination I elicited much information about the city, its climate and people. Once I respectfully ventured on politics, but a violent retort that he would "smash" any "Yank" who tried to cram him, shut me up. I should have felt more pleased if he had not called so frequently at bars; to have left him to drink alone would, under the circumstances, have raised his fire. I was consequently compelled to swallow more ale than I could conveniently carry. Muttering something about dust, he would disappear down some passage, I running close at his heels, and already feeling the qualms of sickness. Strange to say, the quantity he stored away had no other effect upon him than to make him complain of the dust and wind. I began to distrust him, and the habitual fear of treachery made me suspect that each glass contained poison. To my dismay I found that matters had not been over-represented to me. I was told of yellow fever carrying away 35,000 of the inhabitants in—I forgot what year; that the pestilence had raged so furiously as to defy the efforts of undertakers to bury its victims. Body was piled upon body, awaiting the tinkle of midnight bells which heralded the approach of the fatal dead cart. Pits were dug in the neighborhood of the city, in which the bodies were heedlessly thrown, while the effluvia from contaminated and plague-smitten bodies perforated every avenue of the city. As I listened to these sad confirmations of my fears, a tremor actually seized me as I walked—my knees shook, my legs were weak, and I felt sick at heart. My companion, always ready for a drink, proposed a "brandy smash," but I declined, and, making some excuse, fled to the room I had by this time rented. Here my fears and misgivings entirely overpowered me. I fancied I was strangely unwell; but after carefully locking my door, looking under the bed, and leaving the candle to burn out, I laid down, and, after a few involuntary starts, fell asleep.

Having satisfied myself next morning that there was no pimple or evidence of contaminating disease about me, and having resolved to be more courageous, I proceeded to the office.

My duties soon introduced me to my various companions, and I took advantage of every opportunity to eliminate from every one of them separately what I could of the characteristics of the people and climate of the country. Now that I was in the very center of the hotbed, my resolution was made to know the worst. I cautiously approached a gentleman named Mr. Obadiah Sleaky, whose appearance was more encouraging than the others. Mingled with an unsophisticated expression of countenance there was a look of trouble and anxiety, as though at some time he had been guilty of murder, for which he was suffering remorse. Espying a broad scar above his right eye, I ventured to inquire its cause. He told me that whilst acting as second for a friend in a broadsword encounter he had become embroiled in a quarrel with the second of his friend's opponent. His friend having been unfairly disarmed, he had assumed his cause, and quarreling with the second, challenged him, fought, and received his wound.

From what he further told me, I found that encounters with weapons were very prevalent. I never yet could elucidate the meaning of that young man's unhappy look. I turned away from him, praying that I might meet with some individual possessed of less of the combative and more of the humane, for I was by this time growing sick at the cold-blooded indifference of life manifested by those amongst whom I was to spend my time. But, alas! my next acquaintance, Mr. Pumblechook, was no improvement. This was a young man, short, stout and thickset, with black hair, black eyes, black moustache and goatee. He could, whenever he desired it, be very agreeable, his countenance lighting up with a genial expression; but there was that in his dark frown which portended a terrible storm if angered.

I determined to avoid, at any cost, a quarrel with him, so, quitting on my most conciliatory air, I accosted him. He had suffered from the yellow fever, which had considerably darkened his complexion. I took occasion to ascertain from him the particulars of its premonitory symptoms, its average of mortality, its characteristics, etc., until fairly sickened by the recital, and I confess considerably frightened. I changed the subject. Upon my alluding to Mr. Sleek's wound, and to the custom of using firearms, and the disregard of life, he laughed so immoderately that I ventured a serious expostulation. This only elicited more derision, until fancying that his piercing eye was reading my quaking heart, I vamosed.

Two other gentlemen were employed in the same rooms. One Mr. Michael was remarkable for placidity of demeanor and an imperturbable indifference to everything around him. He was a kind, agreeable gentleman though, and from him I resolved to seek protection in case of trouble. The other, Mr. Mummy, so seldom cared to look pleasantly at me that I conceived an instinctive fear of him. He and his office companions were good friends, but the first ferocious glance he gave me, added to the trembling he must have detected when once depicting the ravages of an epidemic, convinced me that he had no exalted opinion of me or my courage.

In addition to these, there were others employed in rooms above ours. These latter I shall mention separately as my narrative proceeds.

After I had been employed about a fortnight in the office a circumstance occurred which will form the chief topic of my story. I was engaged one evening with my books, when about half a dozen young men came from up stairs, evidently with some motive of mischief. Their strange remarks and gesticulations made me curious, and at the same time uneasy as to their intentions, but I was determined to be neutral whatever might ensue. Presently an altercation took place between Flick and a Virginian named Hotspur. The latter was a fiery, impulsive young man. The kindling of his eyes and his fierce expression of countenance denoted too clearly an impending storm. I trembled for the result, every limb of my body was quivering with fear, for visions of firearms tormented me.

Louder and louder grew the tumult, and their gestures became terribly fierce. The crowd of non-combatants seemed intensely interested in the scene, provoking the spleen of the disputants by suggestions and marks of approbation or dissent, and all this time thoroughly enclosing them. I observed with surprise that several of them urged one disputant to retaliation one moment, and did the same to his opponent the next. It was evident they were chuckling in the expectation of a disturbance. However, all this intimidated me less than did the looks they every now and then bestowed upon me. I did not understand them. The dispute now culminated in a ferocious struggle, in which most of the crowd at first took part, with the intention, as I afterwards learned, of having the two principal disputants settle their quarrel in some quiet field next day. This would enable them to sit and enjoy it in company with their pipes and beer. I retired to the farthest end of the room. A fear of appearing frightened prevented me from rushing out of the door; but in reality my lips trembled so that I could not speak for several moments. The struggle continued, first one and then another rolling upon the floor. Whilst the two combatants were rushing in fury upon each other, the crowd, laughing maliciously, joined in the melee. I summoned courage to expostulate by saying "Oh, gentlemen, don't fight, don't;" but my trembling voice and abject look, it appears, attracted the attention of Flick, who rushed upon me, collared, and dragged me towards the crowd.

"B.," he said, "you are my only friend here. All these are against one, and determined to drag me into a quarrel for their especial amusement. Assist me and we will clear the room."

The invitation, I confess, flattered my courage, but the idea of joining in an affray with such odds against us was appalling, besides I had been told they might be all armed. My appeals for exemption were calculated in their piteousness to extract tears from a horse, but they only ensured for me rougher handling.

Flick told me he should require me as a witness to the insult he had suffered, and that he would in consequence take me as an assistant in vindicating his honor on the morrow. I tried to say that I was the friend of both of them, and then, wishful to get away at any risk, retired from the circle. Meanwhile the quarrel was resumed, and I believe knives were drawn. Hotspur ran up stairs for a fire arm, Flick after him, and the crowd scampering after them in high glee.

Two young men had been quietly occupied with their books during all this scene, and, thinking that their quietness was perhaps the result of an instinctive fear, as with me, I approached them, suggesting that this was a horrible affair, and that things were getting hot. Both of them turned their eyes complacently on me, without offering a reply for some time. Then one answered with a drawl, "middling;" the other added, "slightually;" and both resumed their work.

I was confounded by this indifference in a matter so serious; they had not even the curiosity to turn round. From the little they did say afterwards, I gathered that it was no unusual occurrence.

The bare fact started me in the face that if I remained in the South, I must at some time expect to be embroiled in these matters, and, that if disease spared me, the knife or firearm would not.

Mr. Flick by this time had come down stairs, apparently cool and satisfied. Arrangements had been made for a "meet" in the ensuing evening. One of the young men up stairs had promised to lend a splendid revolver to Mr. Hotspur, and to make the "inauguration of the affair pleasant," as they called it, they had all gone to work down the office-dust in beer.

It so happened that I had recently made a purchase of a revolver, but, I acknowledge the instrument was a source of much uneasiness to me. I did not understand its construction, and my natural antipathy to firearms prevented me from making any free investigation. A gentleman had loaded it for me. I had drawn it to half-cock but could not get it down again. Notwithstanding that I had many objections to lend it, the manner in which Flick asked for it admitted of no denial. Thus I was unwittingly implicated in the quarrel, by having advanced an instrument for its purposes.

But this was not all. Flick told me that I must accompany them the next day to the ground, because there was a general rising against him, and he might require me as a witness, or second. I was not a suitable person to appear as vice-champion in such a fearful cause and I prayed to be excused. I foresaw certain danger to both of us, and urged that it was not my desire to be shot so far from home, and so suddenly. But I appealed in vain. "What do I care," said he, "if you are shot. If we both escape, you can attest to my justifiable conduct, but if we are both shot it does not matter, as I shall not then want your evidence."

This was spoken so deliberate as to be horrible. How I wished that I had never come to the South. The contempt shown of human life, the diseases incidental to the climate, the dangers that already surrounded me were terribly impressed upon my mind; and with a sorrowful, trembling step I went to my room that night. It might be the last night of my life. Every phase of the difficulty appeared discouraging; there was no avenue of escape; yet I determined to have nothing to do with the combat.

My pride revolted at the idea of appearing frightened. In nothing am I so sensitive as in the fear of appearing to possess a less amount of courage than men generally. Alone, in my room, I gave vent to me feelings. There were none who pitied me, or had any sympathy for me, so I had to shed my tears alone. After all I entertained a wish to see the combat, providing I could pass safely through the scene. What a story I could tell my Northern friends of the bravery I had evinced, and the dangers I had dared. I fell asleep and dreamt that I was a victorious hero. My darling Sophy Nisba rushed upon the scene, entreating me with tears to spare a further effusion of blood.

Next day was spent in a series of preparations for the event of the evening. They were made silently and with the greatest coolness. A wicked leer in the eyes of every one acquainted with the project, showed the interest and pleasure they felt in the prospect of a mortal combat. They went from one to the other laughing, prospecting and even betting upon the result. The preparations were of such a character that nothing was wanting; indeed there was to be nothing to mar the enjoyment of a "fine sport." Flick and Hotspur had acquired an implacable hatred for each other. Disdaining to speak, look at, or approach each other, they were not loth in vowing a fearful vengeance.

So insensible were their companions of the terrible nature of things, that arrangements were made for a plentiful supply of tobacco, and something called "dew," for the journey, and the affair was to be wound up by a supper and convivial drinks—a full plat to constitute a drink, which drink was to accompany (of course) every toast; toasts were to be proposed every quarter of an hour; but, should a longer interval elapse without a toast, a supplemental drink was to be allowed at the expiration of ever quarter. These unfeeling creatures, having perfected matters, went so far as to endeavor still farther to embitter the antagonist. Up to this time I had hoped that some reconciliation might take place. I relied upon the humanity of my companions to put a stop to so barbarous a project. The full horror of the matter struck me forcibly, now that the preparations were so made as to admit of no peaceable solution of the difficulty. I was told that the aim of Flick was unerringly sure. Thinking this might arrest or intimidate his opponent's action I hastened to him, and acquainted him with this, uttering also a remonstrance on the iniquity of the affair. I was laughed to scorn, called a "skreed lubber," and told to vanish. The latter injunction I did not fail to obey.

In despair at the aspect of affairs I resolved to run from the office, but I was watched and arrested by Flick, who, with his second, ordered me to sign a paper that I was witness to the insult offered him. Although this was the only object of the paper, when I saw the second adding to it his signature, I felt as if it was my death warrant. They told me I must be present upon the ground. Perceiving that it was impossible to evade them, I made up my mind, quaking with fear, to abide the consequences, but to use my legs at the first opportunity.

It was agreed by the two seconds that at five o'clock the party should take the cars, and ride to a spot called the Oaks, the scene of many such encounters; that revolvers should be the weapons used, and five paces the distance. The utmost secrecy was to be preserved, and all was to be quiet and orderly, so that this sport might be enjoyed. As the hour of five approached all were in a state of excitement. The seconds were commanding angrily together; little knots of persons collected to discuss the chances of the combatants; bets made upon the result, but not a single word of condolence for either. Each individual had some instance of his own experience in the field to relate. I saw that I was fairly netted in this unfeeling company, and could not, for the life of me, avoid indulging in visions of blood, of arrest, imprisonment, or probably a more fearful end of this tragedy. Despite all my efforts to look calm and indifferent I was seriously agitated. But it was impossible to retreat. I anxiously watched the clock, wondering at the indifference of the parties concerned.

At half-past 4, I was told to go and fetch my revolver. Like a streak of lightning the idea of escape flashed across my mind. This might perhaps stop the conflict. Congratulating myself with this humanitarian view, I willingly assented and made for the door. As I was speeding away, a tall gent from the office overtook me. He was designated to accompany me, for an eagle eye was governing matters, and we walked quietly along. I told him I had signed a witness paper, when he coolly informed me that I must go armed, as such an act, by custom, implied my readiness to take the place of the party whom I had substantiated from blame.

Upon our return, a group of six were waiting at the door. Flick and Hotspur shook hands affectionately with those of their office companions left behind. A large packet, securely sealed, protruded from Flick's pocket, deeply significant of what might happen, and, in my eyes, foreboding something fatal and solemn.

In pairs we marched towards the horse cars. Espying one about to start, we sprang in and were soon seated with "to the Oaks" on our lips. It was made a point of care to separate the combatants as much as possible. Now we are on our way, passing houses, stores and public buildings in quick succession. The sun had begun to set as we emerged into the country, fringing the sky with a blood-red hue, and casting broad shadows of his golden effulgence over the fields on either side. The evening was exceedingly calm. Fields, lanes, brooklets, farms were passed. Anon a hamlet would reveal to our gaze its happy inmates reposing from the labors of a well spent day, in corners which were still reached by the glittering sun. The scene was one of glorious and sublime serenity. "On, on," my companions urged, "or it will be too dark." I thrust my head out of the window, and as I gazed upon the spires of the city we were leaving, I thought how probable it was that some of us might be brought back bleeding and maimed, perhaps myself for one. The calm and tranquil beauty of the scenes around us, the birds chirping in the fields previous to resting for the night, the merry shout of the country lad, borne along on the quiet air, awoke in me feelings I shall never forget.

What a contrast between the sanctity of my meditations, the respect I entertained for human life, and the callous indifference of my comrades. But even they began to look serious as the critical moment arrived. The guise of mirth was removed and they conversed more reasonably.

As I was a stranger to these scenes, my several companions bore me company, and spoke candidly with me. Escape was out of the question, and, knowing this, they did not care to conceal the facts of the case.

The antagonists were determined upon each other's destruction. Strife to the death was their intention. All the petty prejudices and animosities of the crowd were also involved in the circumstances of this quarrel. Deep seated dislike, long concealed grudges were but waiting an opportunity for satisfaction; and in the difficulties which were to be raised at this meeting that opportunity was to be sought. I was appalled, horror stricken at my position. Such was my fear that my tongue cleaved to the roof of my mouth, the roots of my hair seemed to tingle, and I felt a ghastliness of feature.

Mr. Flick told me he feared there was a deliberate project afoot to annihilate him. He solicited my assistance, which, in my state of confusion and fear, I promised.

Mr. Hotspur told me he believed it was agreed upon by a party favoring his opponent, to load his revolver with blank cartridges. If this was found to be the case he and his friends were to make an onslaught upon them. To insure my safety he advised me to join his side, and this I promised to do. I knew not what I did or said.

At this juncture a circumstance occurred which caused our whispering to subside.

A gentleman entered the car, neatly clothed and of a somewhat prepossessing appearance, but having withal somewhat of the detective in his manner. To satisfy our doubts I was requested to ask him if this was his profession. He sternly rebuked me for forgetting all propriety of conduct, and gave me an evasive answer to my question. Inwardly convinced that he would, in some way or other, be connected with the result of our mission, I tride to persuade my companions from pursuing their intentions for the present. But they sturdily refused.

Before relating the tragic scene which followed, I will describe in a few words my comrades.

My readers will already be acquainted with Messrs. Flick and Hotspur. Pumblechook, the dark, ferocious young man was there. The rest of the company consisted of Mr. Slabsides, a tall unceremonious young man, who had come for fight, and who had little regard for either party, irrespective of their fighting qualifications; Mr. Buzzack, the second of Flick, a young man from Scotland, bold and determined, eternally chewing, and jealous of the honor of his principal; Mr. Dionysius Bubboo, a stout, agreeable looking fellow, but full of deviltry and anxious for a row, acting as second to the Virginian for no other reason, I believe, than to promote the cause. Including the combatants, we numbered seven persons, or "blokes," as I heard us termed.

The signal was given to jump out. We had arrived at a secluded spot adjoining a cemetery, distant about four miles from the city. The fast thickening shades of evening warned us that we had no time to lose, and the preliminaries were soon arranged, a field selected for the ground, and the five paces measured off. The witnesses of these movements were looking on with every manifestation of satisfaction, and I stood bewildered, when suddenly a heavy hand was laid upon my shoulder, and a voice of thunder exclaimed, "Gentlemen, I arrest you in the name of the law! you! (And here he gripped me like a vice.) His efforts to seize upon any of the others were fruitless. They all scampered off in different directions, leaving me an unsuspecting prey in the hands of our acquaintance of the car! My suspicions of his being a detective were therefore fulfilled. I was overcome with conflicting emotions, dread, remorse, nervousness. My legs were no longer able to support me, and I sank to the ground in a paroxysm of fear. My guilty comrades, seeing that he could only hold one, and that unfortunate person, came around us with looks fearfully foreboding of evil to the detective.

They protested that the excursion was one of innocent pleasure. Finding protestations of no avail they threatened a rescue, but the detective was inexorable.

"I know you all," he said, "I am acquainted with all the ramifications of your plot, and have preconcerted measures to stop it. Mr. B., I arrest you with complicity, and shall hold you answerable for any retaliatory steps your companions may take."

To make matters worse, they were now resolved upon a rescue. Drawing knives and revolvers, they made a simultaneous attack upon my "guardian," who instantly drew forth a long blade, and hurriedly shouting, "If I die he dies with me," pointed it at my breast. I saw the gleam of steel, heard the tramp of many feet, and then for a moment became insensible. My situation was frightfully dangerous; a band of desperadoes on the one hand, determined, no doubt, with good intentions, to rescue me; and a doggedly determined officer of the law on the other, ready to sacrifice my life with his own.

The whole recollections of a lifetime crowded upon me in this moment of time. I thought of home, of loving parents, and the faces of cherished friends in that far-off State. I implored my companions to desist their attacks. I told them I did not want to die out there, so far from home. "My life," I exclaimed, "is at the mercy of this kind, good gentleman, (these words were intended to be affectionate and conciliatory,) and if you attack him I am a dead man." I verily believe they enjoyed the spectacle, or else wanted to see me killed, for they continued to make "raids" upon the officer, and only halted when his blade pricked my breast. In these instants I cast my eyes heavenwards in unutterable fear, expecting to feel the piercing incision that would end my days. My companions would pause awhile, and then, from a distance of twenty or thirty yards, would make repeated sallies upon the detective, who, finding matters growing desperate, drew also a revolver.

Mr. Pumblechook now protested against going further, averring his intention to support the officer if more reasonable conduct was not displayed. Still there was tumult, and hesitancy and rage, but I was not molested further.

The nature of my predicament in the intervals burst upon me like a thunderclap. Arrested for complicity in a deadly combat, with the most indubitable proof against me, tried, found guilty, and sentenced to imprisonment. These were my prospects. I entreated with suppliant knee and tearful eye for pardon, but the officer said the law must take its course. Nevertheless, he was a kind, affable man. I was surprised to find how intimately he was acquainted with us all, and with our schemes. He knew our names, business, residences and habits. As we walked side by side towards a country restaurant he told me many wonderful stories of his profession. I managed, by repeated expostulations (for I was yet much frightened) to prevent any further outbreak. At the restaurant we all drank. All but myself participated eagerly in the refreshment, if I might judge from the gusto with which glass after glass was bolted. Whilst on our way to the city I am happy to say my companions negotiated with the detective successfully for my release. A subscription of $100 was promised amongst them to be paid as the price of my release, and as a bribe for the officer's silence. He accepted it, and I was free! Oh, how my heart beat with pleasure! I could have embraced them all! I was free! free! and saved!

We rode slowly and silently back. On arriving at the office I procured an advance on account of my salary of two dollars, and treated them all to a glass of beer for their generosity. I nearly felt disposed to pay for a second.

But with the prospect of a renewal of these scenes, combined with the terrors of disease and plague, I secretly resolved to seek a more congenial clime. When I first arrived it was with the intention not to stay.

Four days after these events I was on board a steamboat bound for my native land, the North. Flick and Hotspur were still irreconciled, but now that I am at a safe distance they may quarrel, they may fight, and they may fall; the yellow fever may come, the cholera may swamp them up for all I care.

B.

Oh B.! oh B.! Next time you write an adventure be more careful of your manuscript, or, like this, it may fall into the hands of those whom you vituperate and misrepresent. Fortunately we can add our postcript to your foolish tirade. What a credulous creature you are! This incubration of yours betrays, better than any other pen could have done, your own self. You have finished; and now you shall know this bloody episode of Southern life and character was the result of a well concocted scheme, and intended to teach you better than to believe all the extravagances of Southern revilers. Each actor was assigned his part, and each performed it well. The detective was one of them. Every particular of this scheme was preconcerted. We need scarcely tell you now that the detective has not received his $100.

Had you remained a few hours longer this trick would have been explained to you, and its moral and interpretation given. But your own judgment might easily have discriminated between the realities of life and the machinations of a few companions, who after all, wished you well.

W. H. N.

[For the Crescent.]

From Novelletta—Extract from my Journal.

Saturday, March 8, 1862.—The 5th Company Washington Artillery left this afternoon, at 5 o'clock, direct for Jackson, Tennessee. Yesterday they attended the Presbyterian Church on Lafayette Square. Dr. Palmer made a most beautiful parting address; there were few dry eyes in the vast assemblage, and even those of us who had no immediate relatives in the company wept in sympathy, for we have all sent loved ones.

What a happy day it will be when New Orleans soldier boys come home from the wars! They shall be welcomed with gay flags, stirring music, and garlands of roses, and their path shall be strewn with flowers. And yet, amidst all the joy there will be sad and weary hearts; hearts heavy with grief, refusing to be comforted for the loss of the best beloved; broken hearts that cannot join in the general rejoicing. But we will not forget the graves of our heroes. We will crown them with wreaths of evergreens and immortelles that will never fade.

Tuesday, 11th.—It was truly a great naval victory at Newport News; I trust we may do as well at our forts. It is currently reported four of the vessels belonging to the mortar fleet are already over the bar; there must be some fighting soon.

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The august body of gentlemen soldiers, known as Confederate Guards, were ordered to go into camp to-day, some distance below the city. It was quite amusing to see the train of baggage wagons and note contents. By the way, what in the world are soldiers going to do with Brussels carpets and damask and rosewood furniture? I'm really quite curious on the subject. It is raining hard; so their first experience of camp life will not be very charming. To tell the honest truth, I have no respect whatever for the *young* men who joined the Confederate Guards—for the express purpose of remaining home. In such times as these the young and active belong where there is fighting to do; there are plenty older men to form a home guard. Some of them paid farewell visits to their friends, bidding them adieu with as much pathos as if their destination was really the front. I hope it may rain all the next week. No doubt they will all catch cold and come home on sick leave.

Friday, 14th.—The enemy have made an effort to pass the forts. We hear fighting has been commenced. The city seems full of wild, improbable rumors.

Martial law is proclaimed, and certainly that looks warlike. The Confederate Guards will have to come up from camp to do patrol duty. I am glad, for they are having entirely too nice a time. The place is thronged with the ladies in the afternoons, and the gentlemen entertain them sumptuously. I have heard of some very handsome suppers. Altogether, it has been a grand pic-nic.

It will not be possible for us to leave town this evening. I fear we shall find the weather very disagreeable, but we will bear it with equinimity, or as the Irishman says, "be easy, and if you can't be easy, be as easy as you can." We will follow Pat's advice and think all is right if everything goes well with our soldiers.

Monday, 17th.—It has been three weeks since I left school. I can hardly believe it, the time seems so short. It is quite pleasant to be at home, dependent on my own inclinations for amusement, to go out or stay in as I choose, and all without the burden of unlearned lessons weighing heavily on my mind. It is true my studies as a general thing have been more of a pleasure than a trouble—still it is a relief to feel released from the regular routine of school duties. I intend to read very industriously—that is, if I can possibly to so; but with all this war excitement, the newspapers are really of more interest than histories of olden time. We are living in history ourselves and making it day by day.

A very amusing anecdote was told me to-day. It seems, a little newsboy, in Nashville, was watching a Federal procession pass. After regarding them very vindictively for some little time, he shouted with all his lungs:

"Hurrah for Jeff. Davis."

"Pshaw," said a blue coated officer, "Hurrah for the devil, you mean."

"Very well," replied the urchin, "you shout for your captain—I'll shout for mine."

Indeed I must stop writing to night, for I cannot say anything sensible. Bob is sitting next me, talking a long rigmarole of nonsense, so I will put my journal away and join in the general laughter.

NOVELLETTA.

HOME AGAIN.—Some time ago Dave Johnston, the People's hatter, at No. 32 St. Charles street, announced that he was at "home again," and we have now the pleasure of informing his friends, the public, all the world "and the rest of mankind," that he is still "at home," and in his usual hospitable and hat-and-cap-ital style, will receive all his visitors. Mr. Johnston has been lately receiving, direct from Europe, a large assortment of hats of every description and of the very best quality, and he naturally desires his friends and the public to look at them. He has also received an assortment of French straw goods. All of which he offers at reasonable prices. Mr. Johnston is not disconcerted by the "capture" of his old establishment during the war, but has rallied to the front again, and throws down the challenge of competition in his old business. We feel that we are doing a public service when we say "go to Johnston's for your hats."

CLOTHING AT REDUCED PRICES.—When a man can be suited he certainly is not supposed to have cause of objection, but when he can be doubly—nay, trebly suited, he should call himself happy. Any one who wishes it can get into such a run of luck by calling upon Messrs. Garthwaite, Lewis & Stuart, Nos. 31 and 33 Camp street. He can suit his back, his pocket and himself, all at once, by purchasing an outfit at the very low rates the firm above mentioned are offering them. And by way of lagniappe can purchase several suits for sale to others. Who would fail calling at the Tulane Buildings after this?

DOLHEAR COMMERCIAL COLLEGE, CORNER OF CAMP AND COMMON STREETS.—This institution, which has been well known in this city for over a third of a century, and turned out thousands of students now in business here, needs no further evidence of its merits.

Facts and Fictions.

DANGERS OF QUOTATIONS.—That crack Presbyterian preacher, about whom we had a paragraph in our last column of "Facts and Fictions," got into more than one unlucky position about that same controversy which led to the relating of the anecdote. Besides the principals, a number of partisans of the respective disputants entered into the newspaper discussion. Among them was one who took up the cudgels for our classical friend. In his own opinion, this man was a rare genius—pedagogue and politician, polemic and poet. Just before the outbreak between the two preachers, this worthy had edified the readers of the papers of the place with a "pome," of which it will be unnecessary to give here more than the first two lines, which ran somewhat as follows:

"Go and watch the brisk Arachne—
Nature's skillful artisan."

At all events, the point in the case was that with a rare flight of erratic genius he made "Arachne" rhyme with "artisan," as though he were apostrophizing the "Isles of Arran," with the accent on the wrong syllable. *Expede Herculem:* the rest of his poetical indictings were as original and as brilliant as this sample. Of course his patron was identified with him; his acknowledged ability could not protect him from a malicious application of the *noscitur ex sociis*, by some of his opponent's supporters. Unfortunately he took it into his head that a certain writer was one of these and attacked him with all his Caledonian impetuosity and classical vigor. His comparative youth and diminutive size formed one basis of attack, which was of course readily enough parried by a reference to Pitt's treatment of a similar fling. Those whose cause he was supposed to have espoused were classed as *obscenes roisseurs*; and that was tellingly enough sent back by quoting "birds of a feather," etc., in allusion to his poetical friend and himself. And finally, he attempted a lofty swoop at all who had written on the opposite side of the controversy, by quoting against them,—

"Scribimus indocti doctique poemata passim;"
"Unlearned and learned we all write poems at random;"

But this proved his most unlucky hit of all; for the whole line is:

"Scribimus indocti doctique poemata passim;"
"Unlearned and learned we all write poems at random;"

And the filling of it up and applying it then to himself and his political adherent, of "Arachne" and "artisan" fame, completely squelched him. The cream of the joke was that the party thus attacked, and who made these effective retorts had previously taken no other part in the controversy than to privately endeavor to persuade the newspaper proprietors to put a stop to it, by refusing to publish any more communications on the subject. The classical worthy, therefore, got a lesson at once upon the dangers of jumping too hastily to conclusions as to who some of his opponents were, and of indulging *passim* in sarcastic quotations.

ABOUT THE TIGER.—We do not purpose, at present, saying anything about that Royal Bengal that takes his prey in gaudy and luxurious saloons, and has for his weapons deftly manipulated ivory spheres or cubes and parti-colored pasteboard. We mean to refer to the veritable "animale," that we see represented in books and pictures as making such terrible springs upon the backs of horses and elephants, away out in those Eastern jungles; and it will, perhaps, surprise some of our readers to find it stated that the common notion thus suggested is quite erroneous. So it is, however, as the following extract from a work entitled "First Impressions of Hindostan," will show:

It is, perhaps, worthy of mention, as tending to correct an erroneous idea commonly received, that tigers never, or very seldom, leap upon the object of their attack. I mean that, in their charge, they do not entirely quit the ground. They generally—in all cases which I have seen—raise themselves erect upon their hind legs when within a few paces of the object they are charging, and, taking a step or two in this upright posture, they cast themselves with all their force against it, striking at the same time with their paws. Some few sportsmen have averred that they have seen the tiger leap upon his prey, or upon his foe. Now, positive information is certainly better than negative; it is no reason the clock did not strike thirteen because I did not hear it; and I do not mean to say that the tiger never does leap upon his victim, or never has done so. We know that this animal, like the cat, is formed with peculiar powers for leaping; and that, when pursued, it has been known to spring over brooks, enclosures and other obstructions, with a wonderful bound. It would be absurd, then, to say that it never does leap, in making its charge, or in fixing itself upon an adversary. I merely affirm that it very seldom does so, instinct or experience teaching that the other is the more effectual mode of the two. A full grown Bengal tiger will rear himself upright from the ground at least ten feet, and, in that posture, would easily be able to fix his claws upon the back of an elephant, and in that manner draw himself completely up; so that a superficial observer would be apt to think he had employed a spring, when such was not the case. The latter is, I believe, a very general notion amongst those who have not been close observers of the animal, and even among many of the people in India. The correction here offered is not formed upon the strength of my own impressions merely, but I have the opinion of many true sportsmen to back it.

Now, the latest authority we have at hand says of the family to which the tiger belongs that "they excel in climbing and leaping," and that "when they have approached within a sufficient distance, they complete the seizure by a spring," etc. Of the tiger particularly it gives as as yet no information; but as it says of the American tiger or Jaguar that "it is swift enough to capture horses, on the open pampas," and of the Cheetah that it is adapted "to take its prey by running rather than by leaping," and yet in the general article says "few of the species possess much dexterness," may not the assertion of the writer of "First Impressions of Hindostan" be correct? Do the Gordon Cummings, or the Du Chaillus, or the other late writers on such subjects say anything to the point?

BELONGING TO ALL THE STATES.—The following story is not a bad illustration of much of the "trimming" indulged in during the late troubles:

A son of the Emerald Isle, but not himself green, was *taken* so (for he was at the time *down*) near a rebel encampment, not far from Manassas Junction. In a word, Pat was taking a quiet nap in the shade, and was aroused from his slumbers by a scouting party. He wore no special uniform of either army, but looked more like a spy than a volunteer, and on this ground was arrested.

"Who are you? what is your name? and where are you from?" were the first questions put to him by the armed party. Pat rubbed his eyes, scratched his head and answered:

"By gorra, gentlemen, thim is ugly questions to answer, anyhow, and before I answer any of thim, I'd be after axin' ye, by ye're lave, the same thing."

"Well!" said the leader, "we are of Scott's army and belong to Washington."

"All right," said Pat. "I knowed ye was gintlemin, for I am that same. Long life to Gineral Scott."

"Aha!" replied the scout; "now, you rascal, you are a prisoner!" and he seized Pat by the shoulders.

"How is that—are we not friends?" inquired Pat.

"No!" was the answer. "We belong to Gen. Beauregard's army."

"Thin, ye tould me a lie, my boys, and thinkin' it might be so. I tould ye another. Now, tell me the truth, and I'll tell the truth, too."

"Well, we belong to the State of South Carolina."

"So do I!" promptly responded Pat; "and to all the other States of the country, too; and there I'm thinkin' I beat the whole of yez. Do ye think I'd come all the way from Ould Ireland to belong to one State, when I had a right to belong to the whole of them?"

This logic was rather a stumper, but they took him as before said, and carried him to camp for further examination.

It is pretty evident from this specimen that Pat needed no prompting to a closer examination, and bearing no evidence that he was a spy, they let him off, and the more readily, as, while he assured them he was no "politicianer," he persisted in thinking any man was a great fool to