

The Opelousas Courier.

LEONCE & L. A. SANDOZ, Publishers.

OPELOUSAS, - - - LOUISIANA.

THE APPRECIATIVE WIDOWER.

The monument's up, and it's often my mind. As handsome a stone as you'll commonly find.

I can't help a wishin' that Becky could see it. Standin' above her, as tall as a tree.

An' yit, I don't think 'twould 'ave entered her head.

If 'twas't for some things that her family said; But all of her folks was anxious to work.

An' so it ain't strange 'at she sometimes 'ad say. Some things, in a fretful an' romantic way.

Their one thing I'm glad of; that is, as a rule, I never sassed back, but kep' quiet an' cool.

For 'twas't I give her what money she earned. From chickens she raised or from butter she churned.

An' 'twas't an' 'advised her to lay it away. In case of bad luck or a feverish wet day.

An' anxious she shouldn't be caught by the banks.

That fall, without leavin' you even their thanks.

I took what she got, jes' 'fast as it come. An' give her my personal note for the sum.

I paid her the m'ns', as all her folks knows. Fer housekeepin' things, an' to keep her in clo'es.

An' 'twas't her how rich she was gettin' to be. By havin' a forerhandin' husban' like me.

An' so I encouraged an' helped her along. An' pullin' together we pulled purty strong.

An' prospered unusual in all that we tried. Exceptin' the children that, most of 'em, died.

What Becky a-done I am sure I don't know. If 'twas't for her workin'—she grieved for 'em so.

An' knowin' their weak constitutions, of course, Wuz owin' to her, most-a-made her feel worse.

Or that she would be—as the preacher 'ud say—In the midst of her usefulness taken away.

But sense she is dead I have done what I could. To show how I mourn for a creature so good.

An' most of the money she labored to save. I've spent for a stone to the head of her grave.

There ain't any handcomer nowhere around. It shows from all parts of the berries ground.

They's some would a-thought that a cheeper 'ud do.

But when I am gone it'll answer for two.

I can't help a wishin' that Becky could see it. Standin' above her, as tall as a tree.

For sometimes she us't, when a-livin', to err, Constatin' I didn't appreciate her.

—Mrs. George Archibald, in Judge.

THE CHINA FAIRY.

A Short Experience as Popular Dramatist.

Tom Johnson was five-and-twenty, and a clerk in the city. He was married to the dearest little woman in the world, and they lived in the rooms in a nice respectable street near Camden Town.

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That's just the sort of thing I should like on my mantel-shelf. I should never be tired of looking at it. Do go in and see how much it is.

Tom went in and asked the price, and returned with the information that it was ten shillings.

"Oh, dear," said Rose, "that's much more than we can afford. Come along, Tom."

But though Rose said "Come along," she didn't move. She stood looking lovingly at the little china fairy.

"Well, it's a lot of money, but I dare say it won't ruin us. I see you want it, dear, and you shall have it."

And before Rose could stop him Tom had stepped into the shop, and presently he came out with the little china fairy carefully wrapped up in paper.

Rose put it in her muff—it was quite a little fairy—and they bore it off home in triumph.

It looked so lovely on the mantel-shelf Rose couldn't take her eyes off it, but kept going up to it all the evening.

Being Saturday night, the young couple sat up rather late. Tom smoked his pipe while Rose read to him, and they were so comfortable and so happy that they never noticed the time till Tom happened to look at his watch, and then he cried out: "Good gracious, Rose, it's one minute to twelve!"

Rose closed her book—she had reached the end of the chapter—lit the bed-room candle, and then Tom turned the gas out. As he did so the big clock down stairs struck twelve.

Just as the last stroke died away, a sweet, soft, silvery voice exclaimed: "Thank you so much for buying me."

Rose was so startled that she dropped the candle, which fell on the floor and went out. Tom turned round with an exclamation, and there, with a halo of light round her head, stood the little china fairy on the mantel-shelf.

"Don't be frightened," said the fairy, as Rose clutched Tom, and wondered whether she ought to faint or not; "don't be frightened, I am a good fairy."

"I'm sure we're very pleased," stammered Rose, "but of course it's very odd. I don't like to ask you, but—would you like any thing to eat?"

"Oh, no," she said, "fairies are never hungry. Besides, I want you to be kind enough to open the window for me and let me fly away. If I can get back to fairyland before dawn, I may find my protectress, who will take away the spell that has been put upon me."

"Oh, certainly," said Tom, "with pleasure," and he was proceeding to open the window when he recollected the fairy had cost him ten shillings, and that the transaction would be a dead loss to him.

The fairy evidently guessed what was passing in Tom's mind, for she flew gracefully off the mantel-shelf and came and stood on the table beside him.

"I'll not be ungrateful," she said; "as a reward for your kindness, I can grant you one wish, whatever it is."

"Oh, Tom!" exclaimed Rose, who had gradually shaken off her nervousness. "I wish to be a dramatic author."

"Tom was always an obedient husband (that was why he was so happy), and so he said at once: "I wish to be a dramatic author."

"Certainly," said the fairy. "Go to bed, and to-morrow when you wake up you will be one. Now, thank you very much and good-night." The fairy kissed her little hand to the young couple, spread her wings and flew away in the moonlight. Tom and Rose watched her as far as they could see her, then closed the window and retired to rest.

The next morning, when Tom woke up, he had a splitting headache, and felt so awfully sick he could hardly sit up to look at his watch.

"By Jove," he exclaimed, "it's twelve o'clock."

Then he looked round for Rose, and found she wasn't there.

"Rose! Rose!" he called out, "where are you?"

"No; he swears it's the worst part he ever played, and he's sure that it will be a frost; and Miss Brown won't have that speech cut; she says it's the only good one she has, and I'm sure that it will be good, and it comes just at a critical point."

Tom was just going to lie down again till the tea came, when a servant came up.

"Please, sir, Mr. Jones has called, and he says he must see you at once."

"Oh, bother!" said Tom. "What's the matter now? Ask him to come up."

Rose went down, and presently Mr. Jones, the manager of the theater where Johnson's drama was to be produced on Monday evening, came in.

"Sorry to trouble you, old fellow," said Jones, "but it's serious. Every body who saw the dress rehearsal last night, says the fifth act will settle the play. You must end it in the fourth."

"What?" yelled Tom, "pressing his hands to his splitting head; 'out out the last act? It can't be done? A year has to elapse between acts four and five.'"

"Oh, you can get over that. At any rate, it will have to be done."

"I won't do it," shrieked Tom; "I won't. I'd sooner throw the confounded play into the fire. Why, its ridiculous. Look here, Mr. Jones; I'm the author, and I'm responsible. You'll either play my play as I've written it, or you won't play it at all."

Tom had worked himself up into a violent rage, and the manager tried to calm him.

"Don't be a fool, Johnson," he said; "think it over and come down to my house. Smith (that was the leading man) will be there, and Robinson (the stage manager), and we'll talk it over quietly. I must go now. I must call on Miss Blank and see if she can play Mary Walters to-morrow night."

"Miss Blank? Why Miss Dash is going to play it."

"What! haven't you heard? She was thrown out of her cab going home from the rehearsal last night, and won't be able to play for a month."

Tom groaned and flung himself back on the pillow.

"Every thing in the play depends on Mary Walters," he said, and you are going to have it played at twelve hours' notice by a girl who has never seen a line of the part yet."

"What are we to do?"

"I don't know," groaned Johnson. "I'll come round presently. I believe this hour later Tom was going downstairs growling and groaning to himself, when Rose came out of her boudoir."

"Going out, Tom? Why, you haven't had your breakfast."

"I can't eat a morsel," said Tom. "I'm done up. Rose, I wish I'd been at Jericho before I became a dramatic author."

Monday night came, and Tom, in a state of high fever brought on by overwork and anxiety and late hours, walked up and down outside the theater, trying to summon up courage to go in. He had cut out the last act; he had given Miss Blank one hurried rehearsal; he had quarreled with the leading villain, who had told him before the whole company that the play was rot; he had gone home in a vile temper, and made Rose cry her eyes out, and now, in a state bordering on delirious fever, he was awaiting the verdict on a play which had cost him months of anxious thought, and on which the management had expended thousands of pounds.

"If it's a failure, I'll never write again," groaned Tom.

Just then a man came hurriedly out of the stage door.

"Curtain up yet?" asked Tom, nervously.

"No, sir; there's something gone wrong with the scene in the first act, and the mechanical change won't work through it. I'm just going to see if I can find Mr. —. They say it'll be half an hour before it will be put right."

Tom rushed into the theater. As he went upon the stage he could hear the audience stamping and shouting. It was then five minutes past the time the curtain should have gone up.

The situation was going fast. It went utterly when the villain, disconcerted, as well he might be, in creeping up behind the victim's chair, caught his foot against a platform intended to draw the table off for a change of scene, and fell sprawling, his pistol going off between his unconscious victim's feet.

With the roar of irresistible laughter which followed this final catastrophe ringing in his ears, Tom Johnson rushed from the theater to the Thames embankment.

"It is ruin. It is disgrace," he cried. "I can never survive it. 'Tis the hour when I gave myself up to this life of constant harass, annoyance and disappointment! How can I read the awful things that will be said of me in the papers to-morrow! How can I meet my friends and listen to their condolences! How can I ever enter a theater again! No, I will not live to die in a lunatic asylum. I will end it all in the peaceful river."

Tom leapt upon the parapet and was about to make the fatal plunge, when he heard a sweet, silvery voice behind him.

It was the China fairy's. With a frantic cry, Tom turned to her. "Can you grant me another wish?" he exclaimed.

"Certainly."

"Then make me a clerk in the city again, and at once."

"Tom."

It was Rose's voice. Tom woke up with a start.

"Breakfast's ready, dear, and it's nine o'clock. Aren't you going to get up?"

Tom shouted for joy. He was a clerk again, and it was Sunday morning, the happy day of peace and rest at home with his dear, contented little wife.

Oh! what a happy Sunday it was. How snug and comfortable the sitting-room looked. And after breakfast, when he sat down and read in the Sunday paper an awful "slate" of Mr. Three Stars' new play, he felt a great weight lifted from his heart, and he exclaimed: "Thank Heaven, I'm not a dramatist, but only a happy city clerk, with just enough to live on, and only one master!" And he never wanted to be a dramatist again as long as he lived.—G. R. Sims, in Ballou's Monthly.

CARE OF LIVE-STOCK.

Satisfactory Results Obtained by Good Feeding and Kindness.

The condition and behavior of cattle when brought into the sale ring indicate what treatment they have had at home. In some instances it appears to be the intention of the owner to rely entirely on the breeding of the animals, under the supposition that no matter how unthrifty and poor they may be, buyers will want them on account of the pedigree. Well-bred cattle are sometimes offered that in appearance would not compare favorably with scrubs, having been starved and neglected until they have lost all resemblance to improved stock. Need a man wonder that such cattle bring very low prices? It may be worth nearly the price of a good beast to put such an animal in condition, and he may never recover from the effects of neglect. No one who is not prepared to give well-bred animals proper food and care should attempt to raise them. Unless fed well and handled previously, cattle are shown at a decided disadvantage in the sale ring. A Michigan breeder, who bought some Kentucky stock at Dexter Park last fall, says: "I have settled one question quite firmly with my herdsmen, and that is kindness to dumb brutes. I have had the matter illustrated right here. The cattle I bought were wild as deer; if any one went into the barn where they were, they would spring up, try to get away, and make themselves generally disagreeable. I have them now so they are quiet and docile as lambs; and this result has been obtained by good feeding and uniform kindness."—National Live-Stock Journal.

John Bright's Jewish Ancestry.

It is interesting to note that John Bright had undoubted Jewish blood in his veins. The Abraham Bright who went to Coventry early in the last century had for his wife a handsome Jewess named Martha Jacobs. One of their children was William Bright and one of William's was Jacob Bright, and the youngest son of Jacob was another Jacob Bright, the father of the illustrious Englishman, news of whose death has reached us from across the sea. The mother of John Bright was Martha Wood, the daughter of a tradesman of Bolton-el-Moors. She was Jacob Bright's second wife, and he lived to have a third. But Martha Wood was the mother of all his children, and of those were sons and four were daughters. By the death of the first-born, at the age of four, John became the eldest of the family. He had been born at Greenbank on November 16, 1811. When his mother died he was a boy of eighteen. Martha Wood was a woman possessed of strong and efficient intellectual qualities. She had been well educated, was fond of books, and had a clear and logical mind. She not only knit stockings for her children, but helped to keep her husband's books.—Chicago Inter Ocean.

Answering for Himself.

Conductor—Excuse me, madam, but I shall have to ask you for a ticket for that boy. I think he's over five years old.

General Atom (with dignity)—Sir, can't you tell a man when you see him? Here are the tickets for myself and wife, sir.

[Conductor totters feebly on into the next car.]—Chicago Tribune.

A sheriff in Georgia actually attached a railroad train by running a chain through one of the wheels of the engine and fastening it to the track. After awhile he was convinced that he had no right to stop the United States mails, and the train was allowed to proceed.

PITH AND POINT.

An old office-seeker says that the surest appointment in politics is disappointment.

The man who never changes his opinion is one who never enlarges his information.

The lighter the individual; the easier to float in the social swim.—Washington Critic.

It does not take an imaginary evil long to become a real one.—Philadelphia Call.

The man who is suspicious lives in a constant state of unhappiness. It would be better for his peace of mind to be too trustful than too guarded.

We are all dissatisfied. The difference is that some of us sit down in the squalor of our dissatisfaction, while others make a ladder of it.—Once a Week.

The result of self-examination on the part of some people is abundant satisfaction; with others, it is so depressing as to almost bring despair. Both are wholly wrong.—United Presbyterian.

—Alas! it is not till time, with reckless hand, has torn out half the leaves from the book of human life to light the fires of passion, from day to day, that man begins to see that the leaves which remain are few in number.—Longfellow.

Affection naturally counterfeits those exences which are placed at the greatest distance from possibility of attainment, because, knowing our own defects, we eagerly endeavor to supply them with artificial exence.—Johnson.

A smooth sea never made a skillful mariner, neither do uninterrupted prosperity and success qualify for usefulness and happiness. The storms of adversity, like those of the ocean, rouse the faculties, and excite the intention, prudence, skill and fortitude of the voyager.

'Tis pitiful the things by which we are rich or poor—a matter of coins, coats and carpets, a little more or less stone, or wood, or paint, the fashion of a cloak or hat; like the luck of naked Indians, of whom one is proud in the possession of a glass bead or a red feather, and the rest miserable in the want of it.—Emerson.

It is always a bad sign as to one's real character when the more you know of him the less you think of him. The fact shows that he seemed to have excellences which disappear on a more intimate acquaintance, and has faults and defects that did not appear upon a limited and partial acquaintance. One regrets in this way to change and recall a good opinion which he had of another.—Independent.

THE KENTUCKY WAY.

How Live Finds Woods Among the Natives of the Blue-Grass State.

I had been asleep in my seat in the passenger-coach as the train was rolling through Kentucky, and was aroused by a couple taking the seat in front of me. I did not raise my head, but made out that he was a young fellow of twenty-two, or thereabouts, and she was a young girl of eighteen or twenty.

"Reckon he's asleep?" queried the girl, referring to me.

"I'm shore of it," he replied, after taking a look at the back of my head.

There was an interval of silence, out on the bias and warranted first color, and then he queried:

"Glad ye come, Mary?"

"Sorter, Bill."

"We's friends, hain't we?"

"Shore."

"I never did keer for no other gal."

"Shoo! Now you is funning me."

"Shore as I live, Mary. I wouldn't marry no girl in our hull section, no how."

"Honest?"

"True as cucumbers. Pap likes ye, Mary."

"Glad on't."

"And mam likes ye."

"Glad on't."

"And pap was a saying to me that if I got mar'd I could bring my wife right home."

"Your pap is good."

"But I can't get mar'd, Mary."

"Deed, but why not?"

"Cause nobody loves me."

"Shoo! Reckon somebody does."

"No they don't. If they did they'd show it."

There was another interval of silence, bordered with forget-me-nots and ornamented with orange blossoms, and during this minute I think he seized her unresisting hand. I think she was ready to be seized. He probably squeezed it as he said:

"So you reckon somebody does?"

"Yep."

"Then why don't they say so?"

"Waitin' for what?"

"To be axed to say so."

He was trembling with excitement, and he could not control his voice as he said:

"If they loved me they'd squeeze my hand, wouldn't they?"

"Reckon they would."

(Squeeze—zip—gasp. Hello, Central!)

"And—and, Mary, if they'd marry me they'd squeeze agin, wouldn't they?"

"Shore they would."

(Squeeze—whoop—call up the parson!)

MAKING BASE-BALL BATS.

A Great Industry Which Has Grown Up in the Western States. The material which goes into baseball bats comes principally from Indiana, that is the better quality does. Second growth ash is the standard, and this must be carefully selected and perfectly seasoned. The best bats are made from Indiana ash, cut the usual length and split, splitting guaranteeing great straightness of grain.

The forest ash comes next in point of excellence, although the salt-water ash, from the coast of Maine, is considered in the East its equal, and a great many bats are made from it. The forest ash comes from all parts of the country wherever ash is likely to grow, as the demand for lumber by the bat-makers sometimes exceeds the supplies of well-seasoned, prime Indiana ash, and they are compelled to take such ash lumber as they can get for the manufacture of the second and third grades.

Basewood enters into the manufacture of base-ball bats to a large extent, and is called American willow. There was a time when English willow was considered by ball-players to be the best material for bats, but there is very little of this used now, and none at all by professional ball-players. Pine, poplar and cottonwood are used for cheap bats for boys, and Missouri and Arkansas supplies most of this lumber. The leading base-ball bat manufactory of the country is at Grand Rapids, Mich., and millions of sticks are turned out yearly from this immense concern. Milwaukee comes second, while Vincennes, Ind., is third. The latter city at one time led the country in base-ball bat manufacturing, but Grand Rapids and Milwaukee passed the Hoosier town long ago. Of course, nearly every city of importance in the East manufactures more or less base-ball bats, but none of them have any manufactory that compare with the Western concerns. St. Louis makes a few bats, but none that are considered first-class, except occasional ones for individuals.

One big house in Chicago, that deals heavily in base-ball goods, every winter advertises for old ash wagon tongues, to be made into bats. This concern sells thousands and thousands of bats, which they call the "Wagon Tongue," and are supposed to be made from the poles of worn-out wagons. This is a nice little delusion, in keeping with the Appomattox apple-tree cane fad that was rung on the country for years after Lee's surrender. The fact is that the Chicago house sells every season ten times as many so-called "Wagon Tongue" bats as there are, or ever was at one time, polled vehicles, old and new, in the country, but ball-players buy them and swear by them, and the dealer gets a fancy price for his goods. So every body seems happy and contented in that direction.

Years ago when base-ball was in its kindergarten stages," says a dealer in and manufacturer of base-ball goods in St. Louis, "fancy bats were all the rage, and manufacturers and dealers vied with each other in their efforts to get up gaudy-looking sticks to attract the eye of the players. In those days because of the elegant coats of paint and varnish, but now the professionals take pride in the plainness of their ball-batters. Dealers now make bats for the professional trade only of ash that has undergone three years of seasoning, and in general appearance are as rough and coarse as a common pick handle, but in perfection of shape and toughness of fiber, they can not be surpassed.

Nearly every professional has his ideal bat, and all weights, lengths and circumferences are turned out to meet the individual tastes of the players. Most professionals are cranks to some extent in regard to bats, and they spend days and weeks, and sometimes months in scraping, shaping and otherwise finishing up the bat they expect to knock out home runs with during the playing season. Linseed oil is all the dressing that professionals use on their bats. No paint or varnish is ever allowed to remain on a stick after the player can get an opportunity to scrape it off, hence the manufacturers make what is called the professional bat, without polish or flamage.—Globe-Democrat.

A STARTLED CRITIC.

How Powers, the Sculptor, Played a Trick on an Art "Connoisseur."

A St. Paul gentleman, who many years ago was a resident of Cincinnati, tells a story concerning Powers, the sculptor, which has probably never been in print. There were at that time in Cincinnati two or three connoisseurs in art, who assumed a sort of general censorship in such matters, and every thing that they said concerning works of art was supposed to "go." They had unfavorably criticised some of Powers' work, and as he did not take much stock in their dictations anyway, he decided to show them up to the art people of the city. He was working in some wax, and had announced a reception at which he would show some of the latest products of his genius. Among the figures was one representing the mayor of the city. It stood in a niche by itself, with the light arranged for the best effect.

The high muck-a-mucks of the art world of Cincinnati attended the reception. They examined the figure of the mayor and made comment on it.

"The hands," remarked one, "do not reveal any anatomy."

"The legs are a trifle short," said another, "but otherwise I consider it a very fine figure."

And so they went on. One of them finally discovered that something was wrong about the bridge of the nose, and raised his hand to point out the defect.

"Hang you, don't you pinch my nose," cried the alleged wax "figger," to their astonishment, dismay and complete overthrow as art critics. The sculptor had induced the real live mayor to help him in his little scheme.

—To seek a redress of grievances by recourse to the law is aptly compared to sheep running for shelter to a bramble-bush.

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