



THE HOUMA CERES

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The Honored Dead.

It was a happy custom, among those of by-gone centuries, for the traveler, as he passed near a lonely grave by the wayside, to cast a stone upon the last resting place of the departed wayfarer, as a token of their regard for the dead. In strolling around the palmetto limits of our flourishing village, I beheld, stiff, cold and lifeless, the attenuated forms of two defunct cats; and as the pristine customs of other ages addressed themselves to saddened thoughts, I have essayed to erect a column to their departed merits, and to ratify the catalogue of their concatenated virtues—casting a brief testimonial of remembrance upon the graves of these departed worthies. The place that claims to itself the honor of having given life and unimpeded respiration to the se worthy members of the feline dynasty, deponent sayeth not; but "tradition so far back that the memory of man runneth not to the contrary," testifies to the fact that their great ancestors, stimulated by a thirst for empire and renown, emigrated here, to the great constellation and infinite terror of the string-tailed aborigenes—a democratic fraternity of nick-tailed rats and shag-eared mice. But among his virtues, Tom often boasted of his Spanish origin—he even ventured so far as to speak of gay flirtation with some fair Castilian cat, carried on by no very distant ancestor, upon the very eaves of the Alhambra itself, in the soft and balmy serenity of one of those bewitching nights which are only found beneath an Andalusian sky. But how much this may partake of delectable fiction or pleasing romance, deponent sayeth not. But in Thomas Cat was coalesced all the fiery magnificence of the Spaniard, the urbanity of the French, and the cool calculation of the English. He awaited with a wonderful equanimity of nerve for the mice to "turn up," apprehending them with fiery zeal, he bade farewell and crammed them, without dissection, down his esophagus. Tom was ever mindful of his glorious motto; "it is better that ten little mice should suffer death than that one big Norway rat should escape." And as it is affectionately remarked over all departed worthies, "We ne'er shall see their like again." How admirably can we adopt this language of affection over these lifeless forms, which were once the embodiment of every feline virtue. Dignified in his deportment, he was never known to amuse himself by that frivolous and kitten-like performance of circumgyrating after his own tail, or idly munching after flies. But by many his wisdom was ignored—some said it was only stupidity, others contemptibly intimated that his dignity was laziness, while some of his basest maligners boldly proclaimed him "fit for nothing," but these foul aspersions will be sent, with their authors, into an unfathomable profundity in the gulf of oblivion. Tom entertained great admiration of his parts, for frequently, contemplating his tail, he would gracefully and poetically exclaim, "All's well, that ends well." The most implacable enemy to the nocturnal promulgations of Tom, was Towse, of the Canine lineage. Now, the said Towse was a minion of the moon, and had appointed himself to keep vigils over the points of night. With hereditary malice, Towse frequently took it into his sapient head to assault, and make a very rude

and insulting noise in the refined ear of Tom, which polite testimonial of his regard Tom was quick to resent. As the lightning darts across the sky, so would Tom fly at the atrocious Towse, and fill his moon-baying soul with wonder and dismay. Tom, as he came to cathod, became enamored of Tabitha—long known and loved by her feline friend as Tabby. To say that she was as lovely as the delicate tints of a Kaintuck Hollihock, would but faintly portray the loveliness which she possessed. Oft did Tom "vex the drowsy ear of night" with a serenade to his paramour, executed in a masterly and brilliant manner, which never failed to elicit the attention of the awakened neighborhood. Oft when the night was wrapt in slumber, and the earth veiled in obscurity, would he romantically stroll to some richly stored pantry, with the beautiful visions of cream mugs and cold chicken appearing to his contemplative mind, and there satisfy himself "with such stuff as dreams are made of," and soliloquizing with his accustomed felicity of expression:

"I feel like one
Who treads alone,
Some pantry floor deserted;
With chicken to eat,
And cream quite sweet,
And all the "old rips" departed."

But alas, for all sublimary bliss. Old age brings on the last scene of his exemplary career, and his big cat-like voice turns again to a kittenish treble. No more will he banquet in the pantry—no more will he awaken his night mew of mirth in the lonely hour—no more will he attune his voice beneath the balmy effulgence of a midsummer's moon. He leaves these terrestrial scenes, but hoping that like Amphion's tortois "he might sound sweetly when dead," and a part vibrate in cords of dulcet harmony on some fairy's guitar, he was gathered to his ancestors, full of faith, hope, charity and fleas.

Grief sat heavily upon Tabitha, and ere three times had Aurora garnished with rosy tints her oriental pavilion—ere thrice had fierce Orion marshalled the glittering pageantry of heaven upon the plains of night—ere three times had Vesper beamed forth, enrobed in the gorgeous blazonry of her western throne, the grief-stricken Tabitha was a cadaverous carcass of a defunct cat. The evergreen palmetto bends over their last resting place, where *requiescat en pace*.

VIATOR.

PADDY'S IDEA OF PERDITION.—Pat McCarty was "a broth of a boy," and altogether as "dacent" a man, and as handy with a spade as any of the whole five hundred who were at work upon the railroad then and now in process of construction in the northern part of Ohio. He was a great favorite with the overseer, on account of his faithfulness and integrity of character—but he had one fault that sorely grieved his employer. Though as sober as a sexton for six days in the week, Pat could never resist the temptations of "pay-day," and when Saturday came round he never failed to get "drunk as a lord." Having tried every other reformatory expedient in vain, the overseer at length bethought of the priest, who prevailed on Pat to "take the pledge," and sent him on his way rejoicing. But alas! the next pay-day was "too many" for poor Pat, who staggering through the village at noon, met no less a personage than the priest who had attempted to reform him. "You are lost, Pat—entirely lost!" said his reverence, with a sigh of gentle sorrow. Pat was bewildered for a moment, but having stared about him till he had fairly ascertained his local whereabouts, he exclaimed triumphantly—"Lost!—is it lost that I am?—lost in broad daylight, half way between Jimmy Stacy's and coort house?—to the devil wid yer nonsense!"

"Biddy, has that fellow cleared of the snow from the pavement?"
"Yes, sir."
"Did he clear it off with alacrity?"
"No, sir, with a shovel."

"We asked a hard case the other day if he had anything stored up in heaven. Sartin, sartin," replied he, "I guess they must be laid up there if any where, for I hain't got any laid up to home."

CONSISTENCY.

BY MARTHA HAINES BUTT.

"Can't think of such a thing! what! pay that large bill these hard times! Wife, you are entirely too extravagant; it must be stopped at once, or else I shall be compelled to fail," said Edward Jones, to his pert little wife, as she held before him a bill of \$60 00. Her eyes beamed with mischief, and now making the wryest face imaginable, she said—

"Now Edward, I hope you do not call sixty dollars a large bill."
"Sixty dollars! yes I do call it a large amount for these hard times. Where in the world do you think I can get all that money from; it is very certain that money can't be picked up in the street. I verily believe that women think it makes no kind of difference at all how much money they spend upon dress; why in the world do you all wear so much finery? It certainly does not add to your looks at all. Beauty when unadorned, is adorned the most," so says the poet."

"It is my opinion, Edward, that the gentlemen are far more extravagant than the ladies. They are forever pulling away at a cigar which costs at least six cents. But it is nothing, I know, for them to smoke up sixty cents per day—oh, no! that is not extravagant, by any means—not a bit of it." Minnie tossed her head, and pouted her pretty lips, which looked like newly ripened strawberries. She was waiting to hear the answer which Mr. Jones would give to her remarks.

"Well, you know, Minnie, that smoking is a luxury which gentlemen so much enjoy."

"Well, now I want to know, if we don't enjoy dressing?"
"But fine dressing is something so superfluous."

"I suppose, then, that smoking is not superfluous at all; would you not think me deranged, if I were to roll up a parcel of bank notes and burn them? I know you would; I consider smoking cigars the very same."

"Well now, Minnie, do you know how many I smoke during the day?"
"No; for I never took the trouble to count them."

"Well, I am exceedingly moderate in smoking—only six or eight."

"Oh, I do not care how many cigars you smoke. Tell me, are you not going to pay this bill?—a small one it is"—(an ironical smile followed the last remark.)

"Small bill, Minnie! where am I to get sixty dollars from?"
"That I cannot tell."

"You ought, then, to be more prudent, and not incur any such expenses, since you know it is out of my power to meet the payment of such large bills."

"You say, then, that you cannot pay it."
"I do—and furthermore, that you must not contract any more large bills, or small ones either."

"You don't owe for any cigars, then?"
"I pay for all I use—yes, all to the very cent."

Mr. Jones seated himself very complacently in his chair, and commenced puffing away at a cigar. Minnie could not refrain from smiling at his appearance, for she knew very well, when she drew the curtain aside, that he would not look so composed.

"What pleases you so much, Minnie? I cannot be hard times. Do tell me, so that I may enjoy the laugh too; I do not believe in people keeping all the fun to themselves."

"Would you really like to know what pleases me so much, Edward?"

"I would, most certainly. Tell me anything to make me forget hard times."
"Oh, I was only laughing at this little note."

"What note—let me see it."
Minnie handed it over, and the contents were—

"MR. EDWARD JONES—
To Rayson, Tyler & Co., Dr.
To one box Cigars, \$60 00

Mr. Jones looked at the bill, and in his confusion threw his lighted cigar in the fire. He found that Minnie had been playing some of her pranks upon him. He never felt worse in his life; he had no other alternative but to take his hat and leave for a while, till he recovered from the shock.

"Oh, consistency, consistency," were the words which rung in his ears as he made for the door.

Minnie heard no more of hard times. Mr. Jones affirmed that Minnie was wide awake that time, and he, no doubt, took good care in future, how he disputed an account, for the cigar bill would rise before him like some dreaded spectre to haunt his brain.

"You lose your time," said a pickpocket to a man as he was stealing his watch.

OUR CHIP BASKET.

AN INDEPENDENT SPIRIT.—"Why don't you work, and stop picking your nose?" said a boss carpenter to a boy, whom he had kept at work on the Fourth as a punishment for a neglect of duty. It's my own nose, ain't it? and it's the Fourth of July, too, and I'll pick thunder out of it, if I've a mind to," was the instant reply of Young America.

One of our friends was being shaved at Antwery. The barber was a female. What was his surprise, when he saw the good lady spit into the box, and besmear his face with the forming saliva! An expressive grimace did not escape that she barber.

My dear sir, said she, I don't treat you as I do my other customers, because I perceive very well that you do not belong to these parts.

By Jupiter! Madam, what do you do in their case?

Why, sir, I spit on their cheek instead of spitting into the soap-box.

"Sambo, I've got a connumibus to promulgate to you."

"Propel darkey."

"Well, den, why am you like a tree?"

"Why am I like a tree?" I goe dat up.

"The reason why you am like a tree is because you am et green! Yah! yah! yah!"

"Julius, I've got a connumibus to propound to you."

"Expatriate den, Sambo."

"Well, den, why is you like a tree?"

"I gibes det up for sartin, darkey."

"Den darkey, I can demonstrate de fact.

De reason you am like a tree is because you am a low-cuss!"

"Good bye, darkey, I exchange no more salutation wid you."

COMMON BLUNDERS.—Errors of the tongue, oft repeated, become permanent faults of language. May we call the attention of the reader to a few blunders every day made, both in speaking and reading. "If I am not mistaken," should be, "If I mistake not," and "You are mistaken," should be, "You mistake." "A new pair of boots," means "A pair of new boots." "The then Mrs. B—," should be, "The Mrs. B—then living." "A couple of pounds," should be, "Two pounds," for a couple implies union. "Direct to me," should be, "Address to me." "He lives at London should be "He lives in London."

TAKING A LANDLORD AT HIS WORD.—The landlord of hotel at Whitehall called a boarder to him one day, and said: "Look o'here! I want you to pay your board bill, and you must, I've asked you often enough; I tell you now, that you don't leave my house till you pay it!" "Good," said lodger; "just put that in writing; make a regular agreement of it; I'll stay with you as long as I live"

An old customer named Ami, going home rather tight, mistook the house and finally began to doubt his own identity and began soliloquizing thus: "Am I Ami or am I not Ami? if I am not Ami, who the duce am I?"

A spindle shanked dandy, says Putnam, is a vagrant, inasmuch as "he has no visible means of support."

Might not a publican who, having been unfortune in business and re-opened his house, be termed a republican?"

We must reconcile ourselves to our enemies when we are dying, remarked an old toper as he called for a glass of water.

Whether Lucy Stone has professed abolition sentiments hitherto, or not, we are pretty sure her last act has shown that she loves Black-well.

Jim Smicks puts everything to use His wife has a bald head, and he straps his razor on it.

Why is married man like a candle? Because he sometimes goes out at night when he ought'nt to.

"Pete, are you into them sweetmeats again?" "No, marm, them sweetmeats are into me."

During a violent thunderstorm which lately burst over Paris, the electric fluid entered a room in which was seated a man who had been long paralytic, depriving him of the power of speech. It set fire to the bed curtains, and did other damage in the room, but instead of injuring the infirm man, it restored his speech and health.

It is humorously said that there ought to be plenty of women in the camp, for each night the Russians come with a fresh Salley.

When is a women not a women? When she is a little cuss.

Texas in the Olden Time.

An old inhabitant of Texas relates the following episode in his experience during the early days of that State:

He had once occasion to make a journey of some thirty or forty miles, and his wife having prepared some provisions, (in case he should have to camp out,) among which were some nicely baked biscuits—she having by some chance obtained a small supply of flour and retained sufficient recollection of the luxuries of former days—to take her to "do them up brown"—he started very early, and the way being lonesome, he rode fast for some time, until he emerged into large prairie, when he observed some person on horseback a mile or two ahead. He spurred up his horse to overtake the traveller, keeping his eye on him all the time, when he saw him go down into the bottom of a small creek, at the crossing. He rode on very quietly, expecting each moment, to see the traveler's head appear above the horizon, until more than a sufficient time had elapsed for him to emerge from the bottom, when our friend became alarmed, lest the Indians had shot him with an arrow. So he steered for a crossing a short distance above, making his way very cautiously, gun in hand. As he was crossing the creek, he observed the traveler's horse tied to a bush in the bottom, but as he could see nothing of the owner, he concluded to "make tracks" as fast as possible, when, as he rode up the opposite bank, he was hailed with:

"Hello, stranger, hold on for a few minutes; I am going that way myself, directly."

Thereupon my friend stopped, and looked carefully in the direction of the voice, discovered its owner laying with his feet up the slope of the bank at an angle of 45 degrees, while his head was emerged in the water; but a small portion of his phiz being perceptible.

"What in the thunder are you doing there?" enquired our friend.

"Why, I'm soaking my head to get this infernal raw-hide cap off; the sun has drawn it so tight that it wont come off, and it makes my head ache dreadful."

After the stranger had eased his aching temples by the removal of his raw-hide cap, the two journeyed on for some miles together, when the traveler branched off, and our friend jogged on solitary and alone until he arrived a his destination, a short time before sundown. Being an old acquaintance, every one was glad to see him. The children came in, and after shaking hands with them all, he went to his saddlebags, and taking out some of his biscuits, gave them all one apiece; well knowing that it was seldom they ever saw such luxuries.

After sitting a while in the house, in conversation with the "old folks," he heard the children making considerable noise over something in the yard, and being seated near the door where he could look out and observe them, he turned around to see what they were at. One of the children was between him and the object of their sport; on its moving its position, he saw that they had one of the biscuits on the ground, with a coal of fire on the top crust, one of the boys on his knees before it, and the remainder watching with the most intense interest for some event which he could not divine, until one of the boys exclaimed:

"Blow a little harder, Jim, blast him, he'll stick his head out directly!"

Our friend fainted. He was aware that biscuits were an article but seldom seen at that time, but that half-grown children should mistake clean, nice, done-brown biscuits for highland terrapins, was too great a shock for his nerves to withstand.

Mr. Jones, after having spent an evening over his bowl, went home a little "how come you so." He was fortunate enough to find his better-half asleep. He went to bed, and after a moment's consideration, he thought it would be policy to turn over, lest his breath should betray him; when Mrs. Jones opened her eyes, and in the mildest manner in the world, said: Jones, you needn't turn over, you're drunk clean through."

LARGE CROPS ON LARGE FARMS.—"If our farmers, instead of laboring to double their acres, would endeavor to double their crops, they would find it a vast saving of time and toil, and an increase of profits."

This statement needs little argument to sustain it. If ten acres of wheat can be made to yield four hundred bushels instead of two hundred bushels, the tillage, seed rent and taxes of the additional ten acres required to produce the first named quantity, will be saved and added to the profits. The expense of tillage will of course be increased, as it is by a thorough culture, manuring drainage, &c. that such increase of crops is secured.