MUNCHAUSEN OF VIRGINIA.

HIS ADVENTURES IN WAR AND LOVE TOLD BY HIS BARBER.

True Cause of Lee's Defeat at Gettysburg—A Tender Assault on a Widow's Fortune and a Fatal Error in the Love-Making of an Officer in the Service of Egypt.

RICHMOND, Va., Dec. 2.—The Slash cottage, which stood on the site of the present town of Ashland, twenty miles from Richmond, was in old times before the civil war a picturesque country tavern and the social capital of the rich district called "the Slashes," from the little marshes that traversed the plantations and gave the name of the "Mill Boy of the Slashes" to Henry Clay, whose family roof-tree was not far from the quaint old inn. From the Bowling Green, thirty miles above, from the Ball Field, the great racehorse breeding farm, down to Helltown, the wickedest village in the Old Dominion, the domain of the Slashes was noted for foxhounds, horses, card-playing, juleps and hospitality. There were grades of aristocracy among the negroes, ranging from the cook, who held the secret of power in the family, to the butler and coachman; but the most picturesque character was the barber, who was generally a free negro, enfranchised by grace of his genius as gossip and valet in ordinary to the gentry of the neighborhood. The prince of this class was Dan Harper, an artist of the shears and razor, but also a virtuoso on the banjo. When the Bowling Green pack and the Hanover pack joined in a far cry on the trail of a red Bernard, straight away from the Bowling Green down to Helltown, Dan knew every horse and dog by name as well as he did the riders, and could even describe the points of the typical Diana Vernon, who was generally allowed to take the brush. But in his old age Dan, when he hears the echoes of distant war, loves to show that he has been a soldier as well as an artist, and in a style that it is possible to only imitate he recalls his adventures:

"Dey say, sah, dat Professor Lomax Smith of Richmond shaved Gen'l Lafayette, and dat John Dabney of old man Thompson's 'Our House' made juleps for Andrew Jackson and John Randolph, but it ain't nothin' to what I saw endurin' ob de war, at de first ob which Gen'l Robert Lee only had a gray mustache, and I were de last to shave de rest ob his countenance.

"Fo' when Roony Lee and Fitz and Col. Wickham and all dem paraded out de cavalry on de Bowling Green I jes hopped on my hoss, Spitfire, given me by Gin'l Tom Doswell ob Bull Field, and rid off to de war. Well, I were barber, hostler, and captain of de wagon train all along promiscuous like till one day I were ordered to take a message to Gen'l Fitz Lee, and de first thing you know dere were de enemy right across de river, and Gen'l Jeb Stuart setin' on a log and a soldier cookin' beef and makin' coffee. All dem gentlemen were in for fun, and Gen'l Fitz Lee took and make me sing like I were a reg'lar trav'lin' show, so I tetched 'em up wid de 'Suwanee River,' 'De Old Kentucky Home,' and sich, and den performed de 'Ole Marster's in de Cole, Cole Ground.' Gen'l Fitz say, 'Look here, Harper, we ain't in fur no more cole ground, so wine up de concert wid a lafiable farce.' Den I giv 'em 'Dandy Jim from Cayarline,' which were the brag song, and had to be acted same as sung to de banjo. How Jim cum down to Richmond on a lark and git put in de calliaboose and hauled up fo' de Mayor, which it were ole Cun'l Mayo in his blue coat, brass buttons and ruffle shirt. Jim splain his case and say, 'Yo Homah, I'm Dandy Jim ob Cayarline,' and sing de song, so ole Cun'l Mayo let him off.

"Gen'l Stuart stroke his long beard and laff, and Fitz say: 'Look here, Harper, you got to ride de cavalry, and I get a transfer fur you right off.'

"Gen'l Fitz had a officer name of Cun'l Montgomery Johnson, which dey call him Mont Johnson fur short; but Fitz call him Cun'l Munchausen, cuz he 'low he could talk de horns off a goat and lie de ha'r off a mule, and he say: 'Harper, you tackle to Cun'l Munchausen. He is a fine man, and done won me mor'n one battle by talkin' Yankees to death.'

"So me and Cun'l Munchausen took to one nuther, and he were powerful fond ob gallivantin' round to see de young ladies scusin' ob when he had duty to puffo'm. One fine day a ole lady came along in a mule cart and Munchausen say:

"'Harper, dis here poor ole creetur want to go thic de lines git de body ob her son kill in de battle de other day. You take and git de mule and git all de information you kin and don't let on, but make b'leeve you ar one of de intelligent Contrabans.'

"So I driv de ole lady up to de Yankee commander's headquarters, and she kep' on cryin' and tell 'em how her boy buried by a red oak tree twixt Possum Creek and Kelley's Folds. Den we got in a amb'lance, me drivin' and a Union Major ridin' long, and up and down de lines we driv till most sundown, and den de ole lady say, 'Major, here's de place, right down dat road.' Directly de Major hop off his horse and git thic his double bar'l spyglass.

"'Look here, he say, 'I got nuff ob dis pryeckin'. Yander's de rebel picket. Sambo, git round and drive back.'

"Den quick as a flash ob litenin' de ole lady jump out de wagin and clap a pistol to de Major's head, and he were so dumfounded he didn't say nothin' and let de ole woman take his pistol out o' his belt.

"'I git you off easy, Major,' she says, 'all along o' you bein so perlite to me, a lone widder whar done loss her son.'

"But fo' de Major could make up his mind she jumped on his horse and hollet to me to follow, and way she went, settin' on de Major's boss straddleways like a man, and me arter her in de amb'lance. 'Fo' de Lord, it were Stringfeller, de biggest devil in our army, and sence de war done turn preacher and make a business of savin' sinners. I 'lowed to git even wid Munchausen for almost gitten me cotched fur a spy, but de Cun'l aware hisself black in de face how he didn't know it were Gin'l Fitz Lee.

"You talk 'bout war balloon, but I tell you Munchausen and me made one to cyar a message clear cross de lines ob bofe armies and let Gen'l Lee know what to do. It were endurin' ob de cavalry raid two nights befo' de second Manassas battle, and me and Fitz Lee and Munchausen like to ha' cotched Gen'l Curry in de midnight storm, and de hebbens full ob fire, and we all shootin' all we knowed how. Gen'l Pope, he got away and left a bottle ob whiskey in a Sergeant's tent, scusin' ob which we all mout ha' been lost in de storm ob de elements. De cavalry rid round and cross de Potomac River, and me and Munchausen were in de advance, scoutin' in de woods. We sneaked clear round de Union army at night and laid down in de woods. Munchausen say:

"'Harper, we can't get back cross de Potomac. We got to wait tell Uncle Robert come over. Ef we could get a Maryland farmer to take a note to U'ncle Robert I reckon it would be grand.' And he sort o' hint at me to do dat, but I sort o' hint back at him, and I couldn't help sayin': 'Flow, Cun'l, you better git a ole woman whar done loss her son.'

"'Ain't you got dat off your mind?' say de Cun'l a-laffin.

"Den we got me a piece o' candle and took and fix it in a little block o' dry pine bark, and rigged dat contraption in a beef bladder I had in my pocket, whar I had used to float blockade tobacco across de Rappahannock River tradin for whiskey wid de Union pickets. So Munchausen took and writ a note to Gen'l Lee what de enemy was up to. We cut de bullet off a cartridge and fix de powder in de bottom ob de candle so de balloon will blow up when de candle burns down. And den soon as night cum down and de wind cum round dus norf, we let her go in de name ob de Lord, and way she sailed like a star. We calkilate de candle to burn 'bout two hours, and dat would bring de balloon inside ourr lines scusin' ob de Yankees hittin' her wid a bullet. Munchausen watch her wid his double bar'l spyglass till she done almost vanish, and we take a line up in de hebbens from de Big Bar and de Pinters down southward to Job's Coffin, and we 'low her cose were all right.

"'I tell you we had to lay low like a ole har when de fox is on de prowl for his meat, and we didn't git out tell we heard de thunder way up to sharpsburg and had been starved hoss and man scusin' ob a nice ole Maryland lady takin pity on us. All ob dat tale ain't but little ob what we run into endurin' ob de great war.

"Arter de war Fitz were appointed my precision one summer at de ole White Sulphur Springs and jest had put de finishin' tetches on a young gentleman for him to go courtin' when I hear my name called and fo' de Lord it were Cun'l Munchausen. So him and me took and set down and had a talk about war times. He had made hisself sure fur a brig major in de Government advertised for him, and Cun'l Mont Johnson, so what must he do, but take de name Gen'l Fitz had give him, and he took and light out for de land ob Egypt, where dere were a war, and got to be a big officer.

"'You see, Harper,' said Munchausen, 'I've done got to be a Pasha and my royal master de Kaitif ob Egypt give me a symetry wid de Yondern' lamp ob Aladdin in de handle of it. De side diamond had b'long to de great Kaitif of Bog'dad a thousand years ago. But you see I'm a native, my native land, and come back to see my ole folks and git a place on de little lake and call myself Count Mont Gary ob Elgefeel, South Carline. Fur Fitz Lee, whom I took prisoner when he were a-courtin' Mary Lee, he done git me a place on de little lake and call myself Count Mont Gary ob Pauline, my bride.'

"'Yes, married, Cun'l?' say I.

"'Yes, he says, 'I ain't see de lady yit, but's mighty sure she's darter to de Widder Thompkins, where owns de biggest distillery in de country. She'll be here to-morrow and I spec you to stand by me, you and Gen'l Mart. She ain't never see a Southern cavalier, let alone a Pasha, and I 'low to take her to de fancy ball, she 'pearin' as Pauline, Lady ob de Lions, and me in my own character of Pasha to de Kaitif ob Egypt and in gold-mounted uniform and warin my symetry and de wonderin' lamp. And I want you to be my faithful Ethiopian slave, Ben Hassan Ali.'

"'I ain't never tole a lie,' say I, 'Cun'l, but bein' as it's you I 'low I have to do it and trust to de Lord to forgive me in the herearter.'

"'So, sho nuff, here come Miss Pauline Thompkins and her mother wid a brass-mounted white-livered servant and a maid leadin' a little dog by a red ribbon, which de creetur looked like a window mop, 'scusin' ob his pink eyes. She ain't here an hour befo' she were paradin' and gallivantin' around wid Munchausen, and he tellin' her all 'bout Egypt and de Kaitif and de wonderin' lamp.

"'So de big fancy ball come on, and Munchausen were got up in all de colors ob de rainbow; and as for me, time I had got into all dem outlandish close I jest looked like a red and green parrot wid a yaller topknot. De band took and struck up de favorite waltz ob de Kaitif, name ob de 'Sultaney' where Munchausen had larned de leader. De Cun'l grabbed Miss Pauline and way dey went down de ballroom, de symetry floppin' up and down and de wonderin' lamp shinin' same like de light of a railroad engine. Ob Mrs. Thompkins were jest as pleased as Miss Pauline, specially when Gen'l Gary put up a newspaper to tell how it were done.

"Inside ob three weeks Cun'l Munchausen and Miss Pauline was engaged, and de Cun'l giv me a twenty-dollar gold piece wid de picture ob de Kaitif on one side, a half moon on de other. Gen'l Mart Gary were nearly as proud as Munchausen, and dey cocked dey feet up in front ob de bar, and smoke and drink juleps and 'low to buy Frog Level and Edge-feel bofe.

"'But one mornin' soon Miss Pauline come down to de spring leadin' de little window mop dog by de pink ribbon, and she were just 'bout to take a glass ob sulphur water when a common-lookin' man whar had come here wid Gen'l Hampton's horses come sidlin' up, and he say:

"'Mornin', miss; I believe you is a fren' ob Cun'l Munchausen.' De window mop dog growl and Miss Pauline say very proud and a little bit skeered:

"'Who is you, man?'

"'I'm Bill Wilkins ob Frog Level,' say he, 'and I want to speak a good word for my fren', Cun'l Munchausen, and hopin' it'll be a match, far dere ain't no finer man from here to Jericho.'

"Miss Pauline take and look at Wilkins all over from head to heels and den take de window mop dog wid de pink eyes up in her arms and sailed up to de hotel and tole it to her ma, and dey confabulate on Munchausen and Wilkins and Frog Level and talk up and down de telegraph wire. 'Bout sundown I come up to give a big bokay ob flowers to Miss Pauline, and she say:

"'Young man, how came you to talk dat way, and you born in de land ob Egypt?'

"I say, 'I dunno 'bout de land ob Egypt 'cept what I read in de good book 'bout de brethren comin' out ob dar under Moses and ole Pharoh gittin' lost in de Red Sea, and sarved him right fur holdin' 'em in bondage; which, of he had been a ole Virginia gentleman dey wouldn't ha' run away.'

"'I ain't talkin' 'bout no Pharoh and Moses,' say Miss Pauline, lookin' mad as a bald hornet. 'Is your name Ben Hassan Ali and is Cun'l Munchausen your master, and is he a Pasha to de Kaitif ob Egypt?'

"'Or maybe it's his fren', Bill Wilkins ob what's its name—Frog somethin',' say ole Mrs. Thompkins, lookin' madder dan her darter.

"'Great day! de moonshin' when Gabriel gwine to blow his ho'n! I had done forgot de part I had played. But I jest reached my back up like a cat driv in a corner, and I say, smilin' and bowin', 'Ladies, dat were only in a fancy ball what I were 'scoomin' ob a part jest fur dat occasion, 'scusin' of which I'm Prof. Harper, known fur and wide as de Barber ob de Slashes at yo' service, and knowin' how to dress a lady's har also.'

"'Jest as I thought,' say Mrs. Thompkins. 'My poor injured child.'

"But Miss Pauline ain't look so powerful injured. She grabbed de bokay and flung it down on de dirt, jes' like a de theatre actress. 'Tell de wretch I spun him as I do his offerin',' and slam de door in my face.

"I took myself 'way from dat precinct as too warm a place for Harper and went sat down by Howard's Creek, studyin' on what were up to make dem high farlutin' folk so vig'rous, and meantime it 'pear dat a colored maid done took de bokay, and gib it to her young mistress, who come in de ball dat night sportin' it, and Munchausen he waitin' for Miss Pauline. When he see de bokay had somehow nuther got a transfer he were blin' mad, and mo' so when he send to de young lady and don't git no answer, she were layin' low like the coony in de hollar when he hear de storm gatherin' in de elements, but next mornin' I took a scout around, and were pearin' down fum de upper vyrander, keepin' my eye skinned, when presendy here come Gen'l Gary, walkin' slow and smokin' ob his seegar, and he hadn't mor'n 'changed two purse fo' Cun'l Munchausen come up like he were gittin' ready to charge cavalry and holdin' a letter in his hand.

"'Gen'l Gary,' say de Cun'l, 'does you happen, sir, to hab a case ob pistols and a copy ob de code ob honah in you trunk?'

"'I got a case ob poker chips and a pack o' cyards,' say Gary.

"'Dis ain't no time fur foolishness,' say Munchausen, 'ginnin' to bile over. 'Read dat note, sah.'

"Gen'l Gary read de note which ob co'se it were from Miss Pauline, and den he say, 'What you gwine to do?'

"'What I gwine to do?' say de Cun'l, walkin' up and down like a bull t'arin' up ground. 'A hated rivie hav' darred to come 'twixt me and de onliest woman I ever loved.'

"'Whar is he?' say de Gen'l, s...t o' smilin'.

"'I dunno, but I know whar he will be eff I cotch him. Let me find Harper.' And he walked into de barber shop.

"'Just a very minute,' say come Miss Pauline and her mother in trav'lin' dress, and de brass-mounted, white-livered servant and de maid and de window-mop dog wid pink eyes, and all goin' to take de buss fur de grays and lite out for home. Day bow to Gen'l Gary very high furlutin' and way day went.

"Gen'l Gary say when Munchausen come back and ain't found me, 'Look here, Mont, ole boy, I done had a hand in dis hera piece ob romantics and sides yo' own feelin's and de lady's I already done drawed a bill fur de legislature to change de name ob Frog Level to dat ob Cromo and I ain't a pusson to be beat; you jes leave it ali to me.'

"But dey couldn't find nobody to shoot and Cun'l Munchausen swore he gwine back to de Land ob Egypt and no mo' see his own native land. But him and Gary set to consulatate on de case, and de Gen'l, he were a gentleman ob big influence, take and write to Miss Pauline 'bout de Kaitif and what he thunk ob Cun'l Munchausen, which he were his favorit officer. Meantime Bill Wilkins happen to ask de Cun'l where were de lady and how he ought to thank him fur sayin' a good word fur him. Gary 'gin to see how it were, but de fall ob de year come on and everybody skeer off to Cromo.

"Cun'l Munchausen time ob de war used to call me Blond Dan, he say, partly account ob my color and partly cuz it were de name ob de minstrel ob King Richard Curry de Lion, so called all along of havin' cotched a lion and could curry him same like a hoss. So I named my hoss Curry, and de minstrel ob Curry' dat I were Curry dat won de races at de Bowling Green, Helltown, and de Agricult'al Fair and made me so much money.

"Folk talk 'bout Gettysburg, but Munchausen had many a time tole me, 'Harper, sho' as yo' bo'n to die off de boys whar found our balloon had took it straight to U'ncle Robert he'd done won de battle ob Sharpsburg and set up de Confederacy ob which I'd ha' been Secretary ob War and you General ob de colored troops.'

"I couldn't help cogitatin' 'bout Munchausen and de times we had together, and 'specially 'bout Miss Pauline and her ma, de brass-mounted servant and de maid and de window-mop dog and his pink eyes, which the last I couldn't git off my mind, tell one day way yander in de spring a letter came and in it a big card wid a colored picture. Fo' de Lord it were Munchausen same like he 'peared at de fancy ball, and on it printed: 'Cun'l Mont. Johnson, Munchausen, late Pasha in de service of H. R. H. Kaitif of Egypt. A genuine article ob de celebrated Crescent brand of whiskey.'

"De Cun'l have kep' writin' to me to come to see him at Cromo, and I been layin' off in my mind to do it, fur I know he wants me to help him on his history ob de war, fur he say many a time dat he tired ob all dis foolishness ob history and want de fut'ure generations to know de truth from his own pen."

ACROSS A STATE IN A SLEIGH.

Four Merchants Went from St. Joseph to St. Louis, Mo., in Eight Days.

The snow reminded a St. Louis man at a New York club of an incident in his life.

"I was in business in St. Joseph, Mo.," he said, "and the river always froze over in winter, and we had to travel by stage if we travelled at all. One winter we had snow from start to finish, all over the State, and travel by stage was uncertain. The time came for merchants to buy their spring goods, and as the stages were all uncertain we could not depend upon them. Four of us, the principal merchants of the town, hired a sleigh and four horses, and started across the State for St. Louis. We had to travel over the best roads, and they were bad enough, so I never know how many miles we passed. But our driver was a good one, and as the snow did not melt we had a jolly trip. It was the first of the kind in that State. When we reached a town the people turned out, and when they knew us they entertained us, and in one town the brass band and the volunteer fire department turned out in our honor. We reached St. Louis in eight days. I arrived in New York the other day from Southampton in six days.

"At the time of the sleighing party our State had not become infested with bandits, luckily for us. Our party carried nearly $100,000 in the straw on the bottom of that sleigh, and, while we believed our driver was honest, he knew nothing of the fortune he was hauling. We remained in St. Louis until the river opened, about three weeks, bought our stocks and returned home on a Missouri River steamboat. The owner of the horses and sleigh sold his outfit for a good sum and we paid him $300 for the trip."

DAN'L'S MUSS WITH A BUCK.

UNNEIGHBORLY ACTS OF A FRIEND IN THE KNOB COUNTRY.

A Finned Deer That Got Even with the Hunter—Attempt of the Hunter to Get Even with His Friend—Presence of Mind of the Friend After a Struggle in the Water.

MILFORD, Pa., Dec. 3.—"Gabe came out of his house as I was goin' by," said the man from the Knob country, "and hollers:

"'Where you goin' so fast, Dan'l?'

"I was goin' toler'ble fast, that's so, and as I was feelin' riled yit at Gabe I didn't answer him pertic'lar cheerin'. It was only the day afore that I says to Gabe:

"'You talk like a durn fool, Gabe!' I says, 'cause he riled me the way he sniffed and turned up his nose and said he'd like to see a deer treat him that way.

"'I'll bet anything you want to,' he says, 'that I kin lick the snortin'est buck, well or wounded, that ever run these woods, if he'll only wait till I kin git my claws on him; and I kin do it so quick he won't never know what lit on him!'

"And that's what riled me, for the deer that I had the little muss with wasn't a pertic'lar big one, but he come so consarned nigh gittin' the best o' me that there wa'n't no fun in it. I plinked him all right, as he was runnin' quarterin' from me, and he went down like an ox hit betwixt the eyes with a sledge hammer, and laid there not even a-quiverin'.

"'A slemmin' nice shot, that, if I do say it myself, as hadn't ought to!' I says. 'He died 'fore he tetched the ground.'

"I got my gun ag'in the tree I was standin' by and sa'ntered over to'rd the deer, with an ols-I-guess-I'm-goin'-to-have-venison-for-supper sort o' way, and, standin' straddle of him, stooped over to cut his throat. I hadn't more than put the p'int o' the knife ag'in his throat when he riz up as if a blast o' powder had been sot off under him. I shot over his head and come down kerthump, flat as a flounder. 'Fore I could make any sort of a move, chug! come them two fore hoofs o' the deer's down onto me right where my hind gallus buttons fastens on. That rather knocked the wind out o' me for a spell, but when I got some of it back I turned my head and peeked up over my shoulder to see what the prospects was lookin' like. I see the buck bracin' himself agin me with his forefeet and glarin' down at me with his eyes blazin' worse'n the livest kind o' coals, and his nostrils was jest actu'ly spurtin' steam. Then I know'd I had only finned him—jest grazed him with my bullet where his backbone jined his head. That finnin' a deer. It drops 'em like a stone and stuns 'em a while, but don't kill 'em. But it makes 'em as ugly as sin. So I see at once that I hadn't killed this buck, but had only finned him. It was the ruttin' time o' deer, too, and bucks is uglier then than wounded she bears, anyhow. Knowin' these things, I begun to wonder if any o' the boys 'd ever run ag'in my bones there in the woods, and lug 'em in and give 'em a home plantin'.

"Jest the minute I moved and turned my head back to see what the prospects was the buck give a snort and r'ared up almost perpendic'ler, so as to fetch them sharp hoofs o' his'n down on me ag'in. I know'd that if they ever landed they'd more'n likely pin me to the ground as proper as a coonskin nailed to a barn door, so I kept my eye peeled, and as them hoofs begun to fall I turned over quicker'n my old woman ever flopped a pancake on the griddle. I wa'n't a second too soon, neither. One o' the buck's hoofs jest grazed the front o' my huntin' shirt as I went over, and both of his feet sunk into the ground, hard as it was, half way up to his knees! S'pose they'd a hit me? They'd a gone through me like a red-hot poker through a pine shingle, and there'd a been weepin' and wailin' in the Knob country for a feller citizen that had gone out into the wilderness and didn't git back no more to his own h'arthstone!

"I had the idea that them hoofs would stick there, so that it'd kind o' stay further perceedin's on the part o' the deer till I could git on my pins, grab my gun, and sock a ball into him where it ought to be socked. But the idee wa'n't the right kind. I riz up all right, but somehow the deer's hoofs didn't stick in the ground long. The time he got 'em out soon enough to throw 'em ag'in me so hard that it tumbled me more than six feet away, and mixed me up in a lot o' wild grapevines that lucky tumble, I tell you, for I grabbed a thick stalk of a vine and climb up it in a way that I made a monkey think I wa'n't any great shucks at climbin', after all. I got up in that tree, and the buck danced and pranced and snorted around for a minute or two, and then went boundin' away up the ridge. Soon as I see his white tail whisk out o' sight in the scrub oaks I elim down and went home feelin' about the chipper as a feller mover feel who'd been ketched stealin' a sheep. And that's the little muss with a mad deer that I was telin' Gabe about when he sniffed and turned up his nose and riled me by sayin' that he'd jest like to see an deer treat him that way, and that he'd bet a little somethin' that he could lick the biggest buck that run them woods, well or wounded. If the deer would only let him git his claws on it once. So I was riled yit when I was goin' by Gabe's house and he hollers:

"'Where you goin' so fast, Dan l?'

"I didn't answer him pertic'lar cheerin', feelin' riled at him yit, and I jest says:

"'Chestnuttin'.'

"'Chestnuttin'!' Gabe hollers. 'What you got your gun for?'

"I kept goin' right along, and hollers back:

"'I thought maybe there more be some chestnuts so high on the tree that I'd have to cut the stems with a rifle ball!' I hollers.

"'Say, Dan'l!' Gabe hollers, 'Kin I go 'long?'

"Course I hed to be neighborly, r'ied or no r'ied, and I hollers back:

"'There ain't no law to prevent you, as I ever heerd on!' I hollers.

"So Gabe he came along, and we went up on the ridge a couple o' miles and went to getherin' chestnuts. My gun was settin' ag'in a tree and I was keepin' my eye skinned, and by and by I grabbed the gun and let her belch into a bunch o' laurels. Of course Gabe hadn't seen nor heerd nothin', and when the buck jumped out from behind the bushes and went lopin' away I see I had put a bullet in him fair enough, Gabe seed him goin', and with a yell he started hot-foot on his trail, and got plumb in range, so I couldn't foller the buck with another shot. Gabe could run like a hound, and at first I was madder than a hit snake 'cause he got in my way so. I couldn't shoot ag'in, but then a sort of an idee struck me and I had to smile.

"Oh, it never failed in the world. I'll keep some of those snakes hanging up there until we have a hard frost, and I can't understand why we people here ever forgot the trick so often practiced in our boyhood. You can't find a man in Macon who has not when a boy tried the scheme and brought rain every time he turned up the shiny side of a snake's anatomy. You watch me. It won't take but twenty-four hours. The rain may come in less time than that, but you will surely hear from it by that time."

The Mayor's advertisement had called for one or two snakes, offering therefor $1 each.

The Mayor thought, after he had decorated all the trees around the City Hall with snakes that he had bought twenty reds in Bibb county, that he had forgotten to state in his advertisement that he only wanted Bibb county snakes, and the climax came late yesterday afternoon.

Mr. Sam B. Webb, passenger agent of the Central in Atlanta, was passing through the city yesterday en route to Tampa with a carload of dynamite and a car containing 100 snakes of various kinds. Mr. Webb intended continuing the journey on the Georgia Southern, but got absorbed in business matters and was left. In whiling away the time he decided to go up and call upon Mr. W. H. Schatzman, and it was while at Mr. Schatzman's office that he read the Mayor's advertisement for snakes.

"By Jove, Schatz!" he exclaimed. "I've got 'em."

"Got what?" asked Mr. Schatzman, who had no idea what Mr. Webb read in the paper.

"The snakes," replied Mr. Webb.

"The —— you say!"

"Yes, sir; I've got 'em. One hundred and ninety-six of them."

Mr. Schatzman looked at Mr. Webb in amazement. He had not seen anything wrong or unusual in Mr. Webb's appearance, and after eying him critically for a few minutes still failed to see anything out of the ordinary.

"Look here, Sam Webb," he said in dead cold earnest, "have you gone crazy, or is it possible that you have been drinking?"

Then it dawned on Mr. Webb that Mr. Schatzman did not know that he had been reading about the snakes, and he laughed heartily. He explained about his box of snakes at the depot, and together the two friends went up to see the Mayor. When they told the Mayor that they had 196 as fine snakes for rain-making purposes as were ever seen, and that they were for sale, his Honor nearly fainted. When he recovered his breath he asked Messrs. Webb and Schatzman to wait a moment until he could find whether City Treasurer Tinsley had enough money on hand to buy the snakes. This was only a ruse, however, as the Mayor slipped out the front door, and, calling a hack, drove rapidly away. At last accounts he had not been found, and the two gentlemen, after waiting a couple of hours, left.

Mr. Webb went on to Tampa last night, but he left the snakes and gave Mr. Schatzman authority to dispose of them at low rates.

GARFISH OF TUG RIVER.

SNARY, PIRATICAL FISH THAT MAKE STRANGE JOURNEYS.

Trouble They Cause to Anglers—A Vengeance Inflicted with Dynamite—Queer Places in Which They Turn Up—Superstitions About Them Held by the Natives.

"It was on the Tug River that I first got acquainted with the garfish and his ways," said L. C. Willetts, a civil engineer, whose business takes him into various out-of-the-way regions. "Of course, you don't know anything about the Tug River, and it is a chance if ever you heard its name before; yet it is a considerable river, navigable for steamboats for a hundred miles above its mouth. It is a tributary of the Ohio, and for the most of its course it forms the dividing line between West Virginia and Kentucky. Its upper waters are in the Hatfield-McCoy region, where there isn't a great deal to eat and the people discourage the visits of strangers—so the river has never become much known to the outside world. I went into the country with a passport, so to speak, in the form of introductions and a companion influential among the natives, who vouched for me that I was neither a Sheriff nor a revenue officer. So I was permitted to cross the dead line, which a stranger crosses at risk of his life, and was tolerated if not welcomed in the community, being shot at only twice in the course of a summer and autumn along the river, which is a a very low average for that country.

"There are fine black bass in the Tug River, and catfish in great variety—black-cat, blue-cat, yellow-cat, mud-cat, and plain everyday catfish—but as the bottom is sandy there are no eels, and for lack of lily-pads and water grass there are no pickerel. In place of the eel and pickerel there is the garfish, which is a composite of the two—a long, snaky, piratical monster with the body and motion of an eel and the color and markings of a pickerel. The head suggests that of a pickerel, but lengthens out at the snout into a pair of long, bony jaws like a heron's bill, furnished round the edges with an array of keen, saw-like teeth. The garfish is a fierce, hungry fellow, the terror of the other fish; he lies in the deep pools through the day and forages for food near the shore in the night time. There is one time in which he wakens into activity during the daylight—when the water is muddy, after rain or flood. Then the garfish circulates around in lively fashion, being able to approach his prey unseen as if in the darkness. Fish, frogs, water-snakes, water-moles, swimming squirrels and fledgling ducks—nothing that he can get at and get down his throat comes amiss to the garfish. He is a swift swimmer after his fashion, which is the wriggling one of the eel, and his dart for prey is as dangerous as that of the pickerel, while far quicker.

"Garfish were a great annoyance to me in my fishing on the river. Angling in a deep pool just after a rain, with the bass and catfish biting sharply in the turbid water, I would feel a strong, rushing jerk at the end of the line, and then a heavy tug, tug, tug, such as a sulfer-bottom buffalo makes in pulling a rope. Straining rod and tackle for all they were worth, I would slowly bring my prize to the surface. First would come in sight a pair of narrow, bill-like jaws, six or eight inches in length, with the end of my line leading into their recesses, showing where the hook and bait had gone; then would come the eyes, and behind them four or five feet of greenish, black-barred, serpentine body writhing in and out of view in the muddy water. So long as I did not try to lift him from the water the garfish would hang on to the bait, and I could play him at the surface; but let me try to raise him above the water, and the hook, having no hold in the jaws of solid bone, would slip promptly out, and back the garfish would go into the depths, unhurt, and ready to take my bait again as often as I would put it within his reach. Every other fish would get away as soon as the garfish came around, and I could take my choice of feeding him bait to the extent of my supply or my pulling in my line and going away. Once I made the experiment of leading a garfish to the side of my boat and dipping for him with a scoopnet. I took him head on, of course, and managed to get the bigger part of him into the net; but his head went straight through the meshes, his fine, sharp teeth sawing the twine as if it had been basting-thread, and his head was back in the water almost before his tail had left it. He was swimming free before I had time to feel his weight, leaving me an empty net with a hole in it that I could have put my foot through.

"After garfish had cheated me out of two or three enormous specimens I saw that I could circumvent them, and I think I evened up accounts with them and a little better. I had been loath to do a thing so unsportsmanlike as use dynamite, but the conduct of a garfish which followed to the surface a bass that I was reeling in and snatched him from the hook deserved no mercy. As part of my duties as engineer was the superintending of some blasting work not far from the river, so I had the facilities at hand, and the next time I visited the fishing pools I took along a half dozen sticks of dynamite with the appliances of setting it off. In the largest pool I fired two charges together, and a minute later the water's surface was covered with fish, dead or flopping about half stunned, with ten garfish, small and great, among them. I made sure of the garfish first, as it was on their account that I used the dynamite—but I took in the bass and catfish as well. I used the rest of the dynamite in four other pools, and I killed in all twenty-three garfish, ranging from two to five feet in length, the biggest clearing out of these water pirates at one time, perhaps, that the Tug River had ever known. I secured incidentally a boatload of bass and catfish, enough to supply our engineering camp of seven men, and an entire contractor's camp of twenty-five men, with fresh fish for supper and breakfast. The valuable fish stocked up the pools again before the garfish began to come around, and I had some good hook-and-line fishing during the rest of the summer.

"The natives along the river have a dread of the garfish that amounts almost to a superstition. They are not addicted to water, either for internal or external use, and they particularly object to entering the pools where these fish lie.

"'Stranger, I don' see how yer dar' ter do it,' one of them said to me after seeing me dive into a river pool and swim around for pastime. 'Yer might strike plumb on a gar down at the bottom.'

"'Well, suppose I did. What then?' I said.

"'What then?' he said after me, with a touch of wonder in his tone at my foolhardiness. 'Let him git a grip on yer toe and a turn of his tail 'round yer ankle or a rock, an' yer would yer do? I'll tell yer; yer'd stay down thar.'

"It capped the climax with the natives when having captured a garfish that had worked his way from the river up a ditch to a puddle where I found him stranded in the morning, I had him served for breakfast. The meat and bones were white like those of an eel, and we found the dish very palatable; but the idea of eating garfish quite overcame one of the Hatfields whom we invited to the meal. He did not know at first whether to thank us or be offended.

"'No,' he said at last, 'I couldn't quite go gar. I'd have to practice a while on fried rattlesnake befo' I could git yer stomach it. Ain't yer afraid it'll pizen yer?'

"The report of our unaccountable taste in fish went up and down the river and back into the mountains. Men and women came miles to look at us, and for the rest of our stay in the region we were talked of and wondered at as the men who ate gar. An act of cannibalism could hardly have made a greater sensation or excited more comment.

"One cause for the natives' antipathy and superstitious fear of the garfish is his habit of turning up unaccountably in the most unexpected places. Sometimes it is in a well that he appears, sometimes in a spring or puddle remote from the river. To find a four-foot garfish snakily confronting you from a wayside pool which had been dry land when you passed it the week before is apt to strike you as queer and gruesome, even if you are far less ignorant and superstitious than the people who dwell in the Hatfield-McCoy region, for it looks probable that the garfish, being a bold and adventurous as well as ever-hungry fish, which, as was said of the old light-draught river steamboats, can go where there is a heavy dew, gets into the springs and puddles by following up the rivulets that overflow from them down into the river during rains. This is a more reasonable theory than the local one that they come down from the sky with the rain, or work their way up from mysterious depths in the earth. Their unlooked-for appearance in wells, often followed by a disappearance as sudden, may be accounted for by the subterranean watercourses so common in this limestone region.

"Such emigrations could not often be made in Such emigrations could not often be made in the way one was which was witnessed by our entire party. We were sitting at our noonday meal on the river bank when a fishhawk rose from the water a few hundred feet below us, carrying in his talons a good-sized garfish. The fish was a heavy load for the hawk anyway, and with his weight to fight against it could not prevent the bird from getting far above the ground. With great effort the hawk cleared the tops of the trees along the river, but coming to a clear place beyond the garfish twisted himself somehow into the hawk's wings so as to cripple their motion, and bird and fish went down, both together, to the ground. All of us ran over to see the outcome of the affair. In the clearing there had once been a brickyard, and a big hole 200 feet across, where clay had been dug out, was now filled with water. Just as we came in sight of it the hawk, looking as if he had been having a fine time, flapped up the bank of this mud pond and stood shaking his feathers at the edge. He flew into a tree as we came near and perched there, very wet and ruffled, with an air of deep dejection. As luck would have it, he had fallen with his prey into the mud pond, where the garfish, now lying securely in its depths, had decided to indulging in a fifteen-inch-round chuckle over the way he had circumvented the hawk."

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT.

An Evening Æolian Recital.

In response to many requests from those unable to attend our afternoon recitals, we shall give a special evening recital

To-Morrow (Monday) Evening, at 8:15.

The programme for this recital will be as follows:

SOLOIST—MR. LEO SCHULZ, VIOLONCELLIST.

1. Int. to Lohengrin ..... *Wagner*
2. Les Arpeges ..... *Tschaikowsky*
3. Kol Nidrei, for 'Cello ..... *Bruch*
4. At Evening ..... *Buck*
5. March from 3d Act Tannhauser ..... *Wagner*
6. Vito—Spanish Dance, for 'Cello ..... *Popper*
7. Harmonious Blacksmith ..... *Handel*

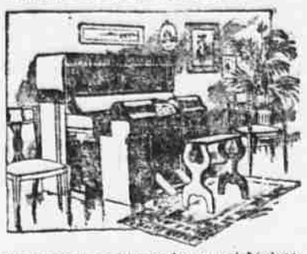
These concerts are held for the purpose of displaying our instruments.

ADMISSION IS FREE TO ALL.

But as only a limited number can be seated, tickets insuring seats will be given to those applying in person or by letter on Monday, between 9 A. M. and 6 P. M.

Besides the Æolian, we shall exhibit at this concert the *Pianola*—the Æolian Co.'s new piano player. This is *not* a mechanical piano, but an instrument which will play any piano. It is not attached to the piano in any way, merely standing before it when in use. If you own a piano and cannot play it, here is an instrument that will draw music from its silent keys.

We do not claim for the Pianola anything not justified by facts. All we say is that it affords the first satisfactory substitute for the human player yet invented—so satisfactory, at least, that with the performer out of view it is impossible for the average person to distinguish its performances from hand playing.



The Pianola in position to play an upright piano.

The owner of an Æolian or a Pianola is provided with a ticket of admission to the concerts of the world, and no outlay of money is so little likely to be regretted as the purchase of a refined and civilizing pleasure like music.

Pianolas from $250 upward, according to case. Circulating library containing everything published, at $15 a year.

Always on exhibition, and gladly shown to the merely curious as well as to intending purchasers.

THE ÆOLIAN COMPANY, 18 West 23d St., N. Y.

DELAWARE AND HUDSON CANAL.

The Great Enterprise of Seventy Years Ago Which Is Now to Be Abandoned.

Seventy years ago last month the sunlight of commerce burst upon the valleys of the upper Delaware and the Neversink, and the city of Honesdale, Pa., sprung into being. On Jan. 1 next the Delaware and Hudson