Iron County Register

BY ELI D. AKE.

IRONTON, - - MISSOURI

IN THE MIDDLE WEST.

A Story of Life in the Great Mississippi Valley.

BY ALVA MILTON KERR.

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CHAPTER VII.

When the moon came very leisurely from under the world that evening and looked down benignly upon Openstone, at no point, perhaps, did her coming seem so inconsistent—for at no point, perhaps, was her light so evidently superfluous as at the windows of Mrs. Julius Popp. For the windows of Mrs. Julius Popp, so designated since it would manifestly be untruthful to more intimately connect them with Mr. Popp for the reason that Mrs. Popp held all right and title to the little house in which the windows were built, blazed very brightly. The little conservatories on either side of the doorway were fairly effulgent, while the barber-shop below threw out a stream of light, and the one small window in the gable above shone like a star. Scarcely less provocative of mention as an especial illustration was the presence of Julius. That he quite scintillated, as he received the hastily-invited guests and led them to their seats, were not, perhaps, an over-statement. That the quiet Mrs. Popp as hostess was eclipsed, or at most shone but as a pale planet in Julius' radiance, was certain. That Julius, too, had during the afternoon as a fortifying measure been in suspicious contingency with a certain black bottle in a cupboard of his office, was also well-nigh capable of being set down as a naked fact. For nothing in Julius' case was more surely indicative of such a mellowing contact than the seemingly aggravated state of hostilities between his mustache and his nose, and upon this eventful evening they were certainly unusually belligerent, the one being quite purple with feeling and the other utterly incapable of control. That those present attributed Julius' exceeding happiness of spirit to the proper cause was perhaps doubtful, considering the cheerful nature of the occasion, for that he should be unusually springy at the knees, luxurious of language, and beamy of visage, seemed not at all unnatural, albeit his remarks by times were rather irrelevant, and some of his attitudes quite startling. To say that many, or perhaps even any, of those present were of Openstone's uppermost social crust would be at the very least a use of doubtful color. But none were of wholly bad repute, and some were quite as worthy, doubtless, as that more highly-reasoned strata simmering goldenly at the top of the stew. This fact, presumably, was occasioned by the counter fact that the reputation of Julius Popp, lawyer, was of slightly doubtful flavor, though Mrs. Popp was everywhere respected, and their signal want of riches. Many wealthier men there were in Openstone, however, of a conscience scarcely less elastic than that which so slightly swerved the feet of Julius, and few in truth among her women were more truly good than Mrs. Popp, but in Openstone, as throughout the world, the lofty sinful and the lofty virtuous were about equally careful that their social skirts did not touch the apparel of their humbler counter-parts. Perhaps from somewhere in the shadow of this general rule came the soft cloud that made the brow of Mrs. Whitney seem slightly more sallow than its wont, as the effulgent light from Mrs. Popp's little conservatories smote against her silk attire. Joel, however, was in high feather.

"Aha! Mrs. Whitney! Mr. Whitney!" said Julius, coming forward springily. "This is exhilarating! brilliant! Ahem—Mrs. Whitney, allow me to conduct you to a seat. Honor me by accepting this chair, Mr. Whitney," and Julius went smiling and bowing rather waveringly toward the door again. The cloud on Mrs. Whitney's brow deepened a little, and Julius' good-natured visage relaxed into a smile as he nodded to those about him.

Presently Julius came bowing in with a pleasant gentlemanly person, "Reverend Mr. Cuttleton," he was saying, "this is brilliant! pray be seated, sir; have this chair, sir. This is uncompromisingly brilliant! Nothing could exceed the slickness of the occasion, sir!" and Julius went bowing toward the door.

Mrs. Whitney's cloud disappeared as the Reverend Cuttleton shook hands, and the smile on Joel's face became less definite. After the room had buzzed a time it suddenly fell silent, as Absalom, dressed in a suit that fit him rather snugly, entered from the dining-room with a quick stiff step, bearing the blushing Ether on his arm. Very brightly danced the cross-eyes of Ether under her frizzes, and around her neck was a fine chain and on her feet white satin slippers. Joel Whitney's face glowed as Mrs. Whitney gave him a scorching glance, and Julius was heard to murmur: "It's slick! It's brilliant!"

Then Miss Yeslit Popp, aged twelve, and Salvo Popp, aged two, being arranged on either side, the Reverend Mr. Cuttleton arose, Bible in hand, and made the contracting parties one.

Mrs. Popp kissed them silently and stood aside with tears in her eyes; then Julius came up in a springy, wavering sort of way, and kissed Ether, grasped Absalom's hand, and said in a declamatory fashion: "Absalom, my son, my latest boon, shake with your new-born father! Bless you, sir, bless you! This is brilliant! slick! You have won her worthily, sir, and I commend her to you as being as noble a nugget as ever thumped a piano or hustled a pot, sir! We are soon to lose you, for they have put 'em to the touch, as I understand it, they have put 'em brilliantly to the touch! But the cause is noble, sir, the intent exemplary, and whatever fortune may—" Where Julius in his mellowness would have left off it is quite impossible to conjecture, had not Joel come up with twinkling eyes, and kissing the bride, stepped heavily upon Julius' foot, who broke off from his eloquence with a sudden jerk and hopped away with a wry face and sat down holding and rubbing his great toe. An audible titter ran about among the guests as they crowded up to congratulate the happy pair. Absalom was perspiring very much, and Ether, whispering something to him to stay his fortitude, received the rather mournful and startling reply "that he thought he should feel better if he could get out and run awhile."

The congratulations being at length happily over, amid much kissing, hand-shaking and laughter, the florid Julius very gallantly, though limping a little, conducted the bride into the dining-room where a savory collection was spread. Mrs. Popp followed upon the arm of Absalom, and the guests being comfortably settled on either side of the long table, or rather three tables in a continuous train, Julius presided with a great flow of utterance at the head.

"It being the slick and brilliant occasion of our daughter's bestowal in marriage," he was saying; "of herself collectively and separately, to-wit; nothing would afford me more pleasure, sir, than to have your unreserved opinion, Mr. Cuttleton, of the relative weight and value of feminine women in the present condition of our social environment!"

Mr. Cuttleton looked a little stunned and confused by the sudden impact, but glancing toward Mrs. Whitney he murmured, "that he thought women's sphere a wide one and her influence well-nigh measureless."

"Exactly," responded Julius, with animation, passing the chicken to Mr. Butler, the baker, "exactly; right you are; slick and brilliant thy name is, woman! Have some of this currant jell with your tongue, Mrs. Whitney. Slick and brilliant thy name is, woman! yes, indeed! nothing could express the fact more clearly, sir, than the statement that woman's weight is measureless. In point of fact, sir, nothing in my opinion contributes more to the continuity of purity among mankind than the fact that he draws his first sustenance from his mother, sir.

The Reverend Cuttleton looked impressed, Joel looked bored, and Absalom was saying to Ether, "that he wished he *could* go out and run awhile," when Julius broke out afresh: "And, further," said he, "when a man gets so evil-disposed that his wife can no longer endure him, usually no one else can either. An axiom, sir, not to be ignored when considering woman's slickness, purity and brilliancy. Also the further fact, sir, that every male man, regardless of age, size, sex or previous condition of servitude, sir, stands ready and willing to die in defending every woman goes unreservedly and preponderatingly to demonstrate man's uxoriousness and woman's most emphatic idiosyncrasy to be—" but Absalom, no longer able to bear the strain upon his nerves, sprang up and shot out of the door with a yell, and the supper came to a confused and untimely close.

Joel was still shaking with laughter when he and Mrs. Whitney arrived at their gate that night, and an occasional wave of humor shook his spacious person, when, on the morrow, he went with many others to the early train to see Absalom Heater take his unexpected departure. Exactly what influence or influences actuated Absalom in this departure it were quite impossible to determine. That it was patriotism, pure and simple, though that became a ruling passion with him further on, could hardly be admitted, since the right or wrong or peril to the Nation's life, had scarcely won his notice till the gathering tempest broke. It might have been the unrestrainable energy of his legs, led by some occult principle of attraction toward that great whirlpool of action which beat and battered a million men to pieces ere it spent its course, that carried him so swiftly to a decision. At any rate, when remonstrated with upon his seemingly premature intent, Absalom invariably said: "I'll see the boss. The boss knows what he's doin'. He'll set me to work quick enough," and other like expressions of confidence in the great heart and head of him who had on his shoulders the chief cares of the Nation. This was doubtless attributable in most part to the remembrance Absalom had of standing a few years before with a multitude of people about a platform in the square of Openstone, and listening with open mouth and thrilling nerves as an exceedingly tall and swarthy individual from the platform eloquently poured out his heart before them. That Absalom had thus listened to Mr. Lincoln may have been the hidden but active agent, working in conjunction with the natural vigor of his legs, that impelled him to so sudden an espousal of the Nation's course; for though he had not carried from the memorable event much that was clear to his untutored faculties, yet a certain indefinable charm had been worked upon him which remained. Little, however, could be said to Absalom for the reason that he could not be constrained to stand still long enough to be intelligently talked to, though indeed many others were well nigh as rudely rocked about with excitement as he. Julius Popp was one of these; and the quantity of language that escaped him, together with the number of angles assumed by his hat during the half hour spent in waiting for the train, would well nigh defy computation. Joel was of a cool and jocund mood, however, cracking not over-delicious jokes with those about him, and now and then setting afloat a bit of chaff at Absalom's expense. But his face fell into straighter lines when the train sped away with Absalom standing upon the rear platform, and there was something like a mist before him when the train receded and Absalom waved his hand and turned with a last look and entered the coach, and Ether broke away with a wailing cry and went blindly along the walk with her hands pressed against her eyes. Many another eye, too, was dim, and some tender-hearted women who were present wept, and not a few strong careless fellows scuffed the ground with a foot and looked away, for Openstone had sent her first son to the war.

CHAPTER VIII.

With the flight of a few weeks came a letter from Absalom recording in laconic language the chief items of his interview with Mr. Lincoln. "The boss laughed," he wrote. "Guess 'cause I was in such a rush. Anyway he gave me a note to a recruiter, and I'm a sergant now and waitin' to get to the front." And as time went by and the great storm spread and throbbed and shook the world, Openstone poured out her life to feed the tempest. The court-house park became a drilling-ground, and the trains thundered away with hundreds of her brave fellows toward the scene of conflict. Some came back thin and sick, some maimed, and many never came. During those bitter years not many letters were received from Absalom, but now and then a rumor, sometimes grave and sometimes laughable, came as if from the far-off battle-smoke, telling of his prowess and promotion. Ether worked on at Joel Whitney's, but as Joel expressed it, their cook was less crickety than of yore. In truth, the land was bowed in sack-cloth and sorrow, but outwardly at least Joel's cheerfulness was unabated. He was gathering to himself a deal of this world's goods; making money "hand-over-fist," as he occasionally told Mrs. Whitney with a sort of gusto. This fact may have in some sense smothered his patriotism, if, indeed, his love of country went much beyond his own concerns, for acquisitiveness had grown with much culture to be his leading trait, though that he was misery, mean or greedy in the lowest level of the term could not be fairly said of him.

"It isn't the destruction of the Government that's being attempted," he was wont to say. "It's a partition, a division that's trying to be struck. And what's it about? Why, the infernal nigger, that's all! And who wants him? Why, the fellers down South? We don't! Then, confound it! why can't they let 'em have 'em?" and he would go about his affairs.

But it is surmisable that Joel could reason more cogently than this, shaving the subject down very near to its marrow in his mind, but doubtless, seeing with the well-nigh abnormal keenness of his business instinct the thousand golden chances of the time, his finer sympathies were dwarfed and swallowed up in his opportunities. At all events, he throve wondrously; buying not a few farms about Openstone during those years, and about the close of the war opening a bank in Openstone. Also about this period he began to identify himself with politics; gradually working himself toward the local leadership. It was a little doubtful whom his heart was wholly with, for principles and moral tendencies had never clung to Joel's feet sufficiently to clog his progress much, besides he was, as the term is usually accepted, pre-eminently practical, and aimed to be with the fellows who were successful and had "the sand" as he put it.

Promptly upon the morning of his fifteenth birthday, John Earling entered Joel's office, and hanging his cap upon the wall, stated that he was ready for business. Joel turned his large person about and looked at him with inquisitive surprise. "Oh, yes, I remember," he said. "Well, so you think you want to go to work, do you?"

"Yes sir," said the boy.

Joel stretched out his legs and leaning back with a half smile looked up at the ceiling. "Let's see, what did you say the bargain was?"

"I am to work five years, sir."

Joel looked at the boy. "Don't you want any pay?" he asked.

"Only some books, sir."

Joel poised his watch-fob between his thumb and finger and looked at it; the boy regarded him steadily. "Five years," said Joel, "that's one-third as long as you've lived."

"Yes sir."

"And you don't want any thing but some books?"

"That is all, sir."

"So you think you are in debt to me?"

"Yes, sir, for myself entirely."

"Do you think five years of work will pay it?"

"I left that to you, sir. I will work longer if you wish."

"I guess five will do What do you want to work at?"

"Whatever you think I can do the best."

"Well, they need more help in the store. I guess you can go in there."

After John Earling had gone Joel looked fixedly at the columns of figures before him and shook his head. "It's sand," he said, "but I'm afraid it's mixed with iron. Hard to handle I'm afraid!" and he shook his head again.

Joel's office was double and built in the right hand front of his big retail store. It had been originally a single room, with a long horizontal window running its entire length looking inward upon the store with perpendicular windows looking out upon the street, but Joel's many affairs had caused him to erect a partition making a private office for himself opening into the book-keeper's room. Here the accountant sat facing the interior through the long open window, where at any moment he might lift his eyes and witness the workings of the place. In the store was well nigh every thing that could be imagined: at least every description of merchandise demanded by the town and surrounding country. The place gave employment to quite a number of salesmen, Openstone at that period being the terminus of the railway that came in from the east, and a large scope of fertile land south and north and west making the volume of business considerable.

One morning, when John Earling's task had progressed a year or more, upon coming to the long window with the proceeds of a sale—the book-keeper being also cashier—he looked up with a sort of spirit-shock as he met a new pair of eyes. Very black were the eyes; at least there seemed a slow black fire burning back of the pupils giving that effect. Their owner was a man of medium height, rather pale and thin, an almost unnaturally large head and jutting in front, a small weak nose and thin nervous lips. His person was scrupulously clad, and about him there was an air of indescribable quiet. It did not seem, somehow, the quiet of a peaceful self-possession, but rather a sort of pent-up agony, or a great pain or rage held forever perfectly still and motionless. His words were few and well chosen. His manners gentlemanly, but not of a kind to invite intimacy. He seldom smiled or stopped to talk and was wonderfully assiduous and careful of his trust. He looked keenly at John Earling, and the youth noticed that his thin white hand trembled a little as he took the money from him. While the stranger ran swiftly over the money John Earling regarded him steadily for a moment with his clear gray eyes a little wide, as if the face before him had suddenly pressed itself upon his attention. The man glanced up and bowed as if assenting to the accuracy of the amount, and young Earling was turning away when Joel came up and said as he went by into the office: "This is our new book-keeper, John; Fowley, this is my nephew, John Earling."

The stranger bowed again, and spoke the name much as if his teeth were tight together, and when John Earling bowed and turned away and went to work, large drops of sweat were standing on the new book-keeper's forehead, and he went to a pail in a corner of the office and drank some water, breathing hard, and with the large veins on either side of his throat and upon his temples distended and perceptibly throbbing. He was evidently not strong, but presently he went to work again. Often thereafter those spells or struggles came upon him, but he seemingly regarded them but little, and kept steadily at work from one year to another. In truth he always seemed at work, keeping a wonderfully fine set of accounts.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

HE DISCRIMINATES

The Colored Man Knows When He Is Justly Treated and When He Is Being Used as a Tool—Another Proposed "Exodus."

Leaders of the Republican party never forget the negro, wherever his vote is to be had. The individual choice of the colored voter passes for nothing if he does not vote the Republican ticket. In Southern States he is either a Republican voter or he is nothing. If he chooses to vote the other ticket he gets no credit. If, in the South, he feels that he can best serve his local government by voting the Democratic ticket, he does it, waxes fat, and enjoys the profit of his right to labor and earn. The negro with his local habitation has the right of all Americans to say just what he will do politically for his own benefit.

But Mr. Blaine, in his speeches in Maine, where a negro is rarely seen, declares that the colored man shall not only vote the Republican ticket by virtue of his inheritance of freedom, but that he shall vote it under any and all circumstances — local considerations and influences to the contrary notwithstanding. And if he does not choose to do that he must be colonized into other territory.

The plan of the Republican Congressional Committee, as announced, is too absurd to be authentic, but if it be true that negroes are to be sent, at the committee's expense, to populate certain territories in the hope that their votes will be felt in Presidential and Congressional elections to follow, it reflects but little credit upon the men who have projected the scheme. We have had one negro exodus from the South. It invaded Kansas a few years ago. Every colored man believed that he was to get forty acres. He came with his family and landed at the railway depot without a cent. He seemed to care nothing about how he was to fare. His idea was that Kansas, acting through its Plumbs and its other patriots, was to give him a farm. For five years or more those negro exodusters have fought fate. Kansas cities have more waiters, bootblacks, calcimmers, barbers, shoe repairers and clothes dusters than any State in the Union, and their votes have only gone to swell a majority already large.

The home of the Southern negro is in the South. There he was born and reared; there are the local traditions and family instincts that root him to the soil. The Northern politician of the Blaine stamp who seeks his vote may talk of colonization and all that, but the Southern colored man knows where he lives. He knows he is no longer a slave; he knows that the second generation, of which both he and his employer are types, have long ago forgotten asperities. The man and his employer work together in the field and at the polls—they work for a common interest. If that interest does not quite meet the views of Mr. Blaine and his friends, it is not the fault of the colored man. Mr. Blaine and his friends can gain nothing by colonizing negroes anywhere. Sooner or later the colonizationists absorb the political ideas and views of their surroundings; and it is the highest proof of the colored man's intelligence that he can and does discriminate. When he finds he is being used for political purposes without corresponding benefit or credit to himself, he quickly draws the line.—*Chicago Herald.*

PRESS PARAGRAPHS.

——A Philadelphia editor who has just been visiting Mr. Blaine tells an interviewer: "Understand me, James G. Blaine does not seek the nomination, for he told me so." This is a rare case, indeed, of journalistic innocence and credulity.—*Chicago Times.*

——Considering the horrible failure Blaine made in the brief time he was running the foreign policy of the Government, Democrats can regard his assaults upon the foreign policy of the present Administration with equanimity.—*Cleveland Plaindealer.*

——The Republicans of Indiana want the purity of the ballot-box maintained. It will be recalled to mind that several regiments of soldiers from other States voted in nearly every ward in Indianapolis under the direction of the Republican committee, during the war.—*Buffalo Times.*

——By the way, was it not James G. Blaine who some time ago said he had retired from politics and was going to devote the rest of his time to literary labors? Since the laboring men of Maine have concluded to oppose his candidates it appears that it would have been better for Mr. Blaine if he had kept this promise.—*Chicago News.*

——On the 4th of next March William Mahone steps down and out of the Senate never to return. There have been men in this country who, in their day and generation, felt the full weight of the people's scorn and hatred, but not one among them all ever sounded the depths of misery that Mahone is destined to reach.—*Atlanta Constitution.*

——It is astonishing that bright Republican correspondents should scour the South in all directions, diligently interview the negroes, and still hear never a word about the Freedmen's Bank, or the old forty-acres-and-a-mule confidence game. It is suspected that these interviews are very ably and carefully edited before they are printed.—*St. Louis Post-Dispatch.*

——Perhaps the hope lingers in the minds of some Republican politicians that there is no more victory in the waves of the bloody shirt, but out among the people it is plain that the old era of sectional or race politics has passed away entirely, and that hereafter the national contests must be decided on national issue, and not on sectional animosities.—*Louisville Courier-Journal.*

The President's Good Reasons.

President Cleveland, in giving his reasons for pardoning a man the other day, mentions one reason which is not sufficiently considered by any of us.

"He has served five years," said the President, "and whatever good is ever to be wrought upon him individually has already been accomplished. At the time of his conviction his wife, a noble, courageous and devoted woman, and five small children, were the sufferers for his crime, and exacted the sympathy of the entire community. By her patient, hard labor to support her children, and her never-failing hope in the darkest days, this wife has demonstrated that she, at least, is entitled to clemency."

This is well said. In too many instances the penalty of crime unfortunately falls chiefly upon the innocent family of the criminal. When the art of justice is perfected, we hope there will be modes of lessening this cruel wrong.—*N. Y. Ledger.*

THE BOOKS OPENED.

An Incomplete Table of Defalcations Since 1861 Shows That the Republican Party Owes the Government Nearly Thirteen Million Dollars.

One of the most striking chapters of the Democratic campaign book will be that which is devoted to the defalcations of Republican office-holders during Republican sway. It has been prepared with great care and much labor from official figures, and makes a more damaging showing than was ever anticipated. The chapter is headed "Opening the Books," and vindicates a promise long made by the Democracy to the people of the country. It says the Democratic party, through its press and by its speakers, declared for the past ten years publicly that if it could turn the rascals out and get at the books they could demonstrate that the Republican party, in its long lease of power, had, through its various officers, by defalcation in collections and disbursements, stolen millions of the people's money. Mr. Tilden, in 1876 claimed the amount to be over $5,000,000. The amount will reach $20,000,000 or more.

Under a resolution of the House passed January 28, the Acting Secretary of the Treasury transmitted a letter to the House of Representatives in which it is shown officially that the balances now due the Government on account of defalcations in disbursements and collections since 1861 is $12,893,470. In this document each delinquent is named and the exact amount due the Government stated. This does not include the overhauling of the accounts of the Post-office Department. The Sixth Auditor says that the amount of work would be so enormous to get up the accounts of all the officers under the Post-office Department, and get at the balances due from each of them, that it is impossible with the present force to accomplish it. So it is found from an examination of the books in part, showing only about half of the disbursing and receiving officers' accounts, that the balance due by these receiving and disbursing officers, for which they have defaulted to the Government, is over $12,000,000. The balance due from the others' amounts by the same ratio to a larger amount. The foregoing statement and the table which is hereafter inserted does not include shortage, as has been said, in the Sixth Auditor's office, which has charge of the vast expenditures of the Post-office Department. It was there that the star route thieves figured. Nor does it include the shortage in the Third Auditor's office, which embraced the expenditures of the War Department, where Howgate, Hodge and other kindred spirits had their day. Nor does it include the shortage in the Fourth Auditor's office, which has charge of expenditures in the Navy Department, where the Robeson gang paid more for the repair of old ships than they originally cost, and had no ships left.

The records will show that since the Democratic Administration took hold, as is heretofore shown in the report of the First Comptroller of the Treasury, an earnest effort is being made to collect all these balances, and with much greater success than could have been anticipated, owing to the long lapse of time. This is simply a partial peep into the books. The short time that the Democratic Administration has been in power rendered it impossible at this time to give a full exposure of all the delinquencies and defalcations of the Republican office-holders who were not prosecuted for their robbery and plunder, but kept in power by the Republican party. The branches of the service in which these defalcations occurred are shown by the following table:

Customs disbursements	$ 192,194 00
Internal Revenue disbursements	35,969 00
Diplomatic disbursements	724,591 00
Treasury disbursements	5,692,424 00
Judiciary	800,064 00
Interior civil disbursements	338,080 00
Receipts for customs	375,264 00
Receipts for Internal Revenue	3,424,570 00
Receipts for sales public lands	274,503 00
Receipts for Internal Revenue stamps	321,177 00
Receipts for Customs-office emoluments	28,804 00
Receipts for miscellaneous sources	158,173 00
Receipts for captured and abandoned property	527,685 00
Total since 1861	$12,893,470 00

—*Cincinnati Enquirer.*

The Republican Attitude.

What is the attitude of the Republican party in this year 1886 regarding Civil-Service reform, and what does it betoken? There is abundant condemnation of the Administration for failures to keep its pledges in this respect; but what do Republicans pledge themselves to do in case power is given to them? Nothing at all. In Maine, Vermont and Illinois there is in the platform a general and rather indifferent reference to the matter. In most of the States it is not mentioned at all as an item of the Republican creed. In Indiana alone do the Republicans, with apparent earnestness, approve the enforcement of the law and call for an extension of its principles. And this while the Democratic President, in spite of all mistakes and violations, is doing more and withstanding more in support of the principles of the reform than any Republican President has had the independence and courage to attempt, and Democratic conventions all over the land are committing themselves, without express qualification, to approval of his Administration, and in many instances especially commending his devotion to Civil-Service reform. It looks as if Republican politicians did not want any extension of Civil-Service reform principles until after they get an opportunity to turn out Mr. Cleveland's appointees and fill the offices again with their own class.

Suppose Mr. Cleveland continues, as he has thus far gone on, retaining in office many Republicans, even after the expiration of the term for which they were appointed by a Republican President under the law which a Republican Congress would not repeal, although its repeal was desired by Civil-Service reformers; appointing in conspicuous cases Republicans of approved character and fitness to office; improving and strengthening the executive regulations by which the Civil-Service act is applied, where they are weak—and suppose that, with this record, he should be renominated by the Democratic party, do Republicans think the record they are making will induce the people to turn Mr. Cleveland out in order to make Mr. Blaine, or any Republican whose reputation as a reformer is no better established, President?—*Boston Herald.*

——A society has been formed in Brooklyn to prevent premature burials. Something of this sort is the only thing that will save the Republican party of Missouri from an untimely grave.—*St. Louis Republican.*

FALL MANURING.

An Excellent Time for Applying Fertilizers to the Soil.

A great mistake is made by many farmers in the use of manure in the fall by leaving it in heaps in the field until it can be spread over the land. It is quite common to see these manure heaps thus lying for months exposed to the weather. This is a great waste. The rain washes the soluble part of the heaps into the soil, and this portion of it is of far the greatest value, what is left being bereft of almost all its fertilizing elements. Consequently a few spots of the field are made exceedingly rich while all the rest is scarcely manured at all. The wheat or rye in the manured places is too rank, and will fall down and yield nothing, while the remainder is starved for want of food. Thus the crop is damaged instead of benefited and the land is no better than before.

In spreading manure for the wheat crop it is convenient to drop it in small heaps, as by this means it can be measured out accurately over the land. But it should be scattered as it is dropped. There is no extra expense or loss of time about this, for it must be done some time, and there is a great gain, as has been shown in doing it at the right time. There is no loss in spreading manure over the land at any time if it is scattered evenly, or with due regard to the needs of the land. There is often a marked difference in the quality of the land in the same field, for various reasons, and this should be taken into account in the manuring. The less fertile portions of the land should be brought up gradually by giving them more manure than the remainder until the soil is of even quality all through.

Manure that is exposed to the weather loses its soluble substance and when it is not spread where it is to be finally used. When heaped in yards it loses fully one-fourth of its value in three months, the greatest part of the loss being in the nitrogen, which is changed into nitric acid or ammonia, and either is washed out by the rains or escapes into the atmosphere. There is also a loss of the inorganic portions of it, chiefly the potash, which is washed out by the rain as it is developed by the decomposition of the organic matter. When the manure is spread on the fields no waste occurs, at least when it is spread evenly, because every thing goes into the soil, where it does the most good and where it is wanted. Many farmers, knowing this and having opportunities to do so, spread the manure as it is made on the fields, and thus use it with the greatest economy.

But is it evident that the common practice of top dressing wheat fields in the winter is not a desirable practice and that the manure is far more beneficial to the crop, and far more economically used when it is used in the fall. When the land is frozen it can not absorb anything because the water which may fall upon the surface flows off at once and necessarily carries off every thing which is held in it in solution. Hence there is much loss of valuable matter caused by the washing of manure that is spread in the winter, and the common practice of top dressing grain fields at that season is not to be commended.

In the fall use of manure it is by far the best way to plow it in the soil: not to bury it completely but to lap it in between the furrow slices from the top to the bottom of them. It is then completely mixed with the soil by subsequent harrowing, and can be quickly reached by the roots of the young plants. Moreover, the inert plant food in it is very rapidly developed by the active oxidation of the organic matter in the soil, and this process is all the more effective and rapid as the soil is made finer by good culture and tillage. Porous substances have the power of causing the oxygen of the air to act with exceedingly rapid effect upon carbonaceous substances. This is shown by the very common spontaneous combustion of saw-dust, cotton waste, woolen rags and similar substances which are saturated with oil; the oxygen is condensed in the interestices of the porous matter and so rapidly oxidizes it that it heats and finally inflames. Precisely a similar action takes place in porous mellow soil, and the manure in it is quickly decomposed, (decomposition is a slow combustion, and nothing less or more,) and brought into a useful condition for the plants to feed upon. Hence the fall is an excellent time for applying manure to the soil and plowing it in and distributing it by harrowing, and the more the soil is pulverized the better results are secured for the crops.—*N. Y. Times.*

PICKING UP A TORPEDO.

The Somewhat Hazardous Occupation of a Bold Union Mariner.

I was among others detailed from the Federal steamer Monongahela to search the Red river between the Tensar and the Mississippi for the torpedoes which had been planted by the Confederates before our fleet appeared in those waters. These torpedoes were of all makes, shapes and sizes, from a pork barrel half-full of powder, to be fired by electricity from the shore, to a glass demijohn holding ten pounds and to be exploded by contact. Some were on the surface, some just under it and some on the bottom. We went out in gangs of four in row-boats to hunt for these terrifiers, each boat being provided with grapnels, nets, boat-hooks and whatever else was needed for fishing up the monsters. We had to go slow and exercise great caution, for the channel was tortuous and no one could guess at what point we would come across a torpedo. While the woods were shelled two or three times a day by our gunboats, the Confederate swamp-cats were by no means driven out. They had every chance to secrete themselves along the banks, and we realized that if we came upon an electric torpedo which could be exploded from the shore we ran every risk of being blown sky-high.

We had been at work three or four days and had fished up seven or eight ugly-looking fellows, when we got into a part of the channel which ran within fifty feet of the right hand bank. Just at this time a colored man who had been lying out in the swamps for several weeks waiting for his deliverance informed us that he had observed men planting something in this bend about two weeks before. He thought there were wires leading from it to the swamp, but we scouted about for a couple of hours without being able to find that such was the case. The bank was a dense jungle in which a thousand men could have concealed themselves and the gunboats could not shell it from the position they had taken.

It was about an hour after dinner that we moved up and began grappling in the bend. The boat in which I was stationed turned her bow down stream, threw over her grapnels, and two men used the oars to give her headway. We had not pulled fifty feet when the irons took hold, and drew the boat back to the spot by means of the rope. Then, standing on the seat in the stern, I lifted at the obstruction, and it came slowly up. It had just appeared at the surface sufficient for me to make out that it was a boiler-iron torpedo when there came an awful explosion. At the same instant our boat was lifted high in the air and broken to pieces, and I scarcely comprehended what had occurred until I found myself in the water at least two hundred feet below the point of explosion. My hair, whiskers and eyebrows were badly singed, and my clothing was on fire as I came down after the flight. While I had escaped the other three men were killed outright and horribly mangled, and the great wave created swamped the boat working a few hundred feet below us and drowned one of her crew.

While swimming for this capsized boat a man stood on the bank of the river and fired four shots at me from a revolver, and with the fifth he killed the colored man who had given us information. The victim stood on the bank, about midway between the two boats, and was shot through the head. The torpedo was no doubt exploded by electricity, and the man who fired the shots was the operator who exploded it.—*Cor. Detroit Free Press.*

GOVERNMENT BALANCES.

Interesting Statements From the Books of the Register of the Treasury.

The statement of balances due to and from the United States from 1789 to June 30, 1885, on the books of the Register of the Treasury has just been printed. It shows that we owe small amounts to about seven hundred and fifty individuals, on account of "decedents' trust fund," aggregating $50,080,94. The "decedents' trust fund" is composed of the proceeds of the personal estate of American citizens who die aboard, leaving no legel representative, partner in trade or trustee, which the Consuls of the United States are required to transmit to the Treasury, there to be held in trust for the lawful claimant. We also owe on account of "outstanding liabilities" $569,408,51, but this is not an indebtedness in the same sense that the other is. When a draft is given to any one in liquidation of a debt due by the Government and it is not presented or paid within the space of three years, in order to close the account of the disbursing officer who drew it, the Treasurer is required to deposit the money which it represents in the Treasury to the credit of the person entitled to payment, and into an appropriation styled "outstanding liabilities." The balances due to and from the United States on the accounts of the various officers of the Government are clearly shown in the following recapitulation of the Register:

ON ACCOUNT OF—	Balance due United States	Balance due from United States
Customs — disbursements	$ 266,367 66	$ 41,178 95
Internal revenue—disbursements	35,969 09	13 75
Diplomatic—disbursements	1,104,641 72	56,951 85
Treasury — disbursements	12,877,964 53	98,988 28
Judiciary — disbursements	986,257 59	126,326 15
Interior civil — disbursements	603,914 53	14,969 80
Receipts from customs	3,528,919 04	10,681 48
Receipts from internal revenue	3,413,100 86	6,648 32
Receipts from sales of public lands	1,814,342 91	20,229 02
Receipts from internal-revenue stamps	321,329 94	274 71
Receipts from customs, official emoluments	82,968 15	1633 55
Receipts from customs, miscellaneous sources	220,792 61	5,069 27
Receipts from captured and abandoned property	527,685 77	139 37
	$21,809,191 40	$382,104 56

—*Washington Cor. N. Y. Post.*

PRECOCIOUS CHILDREN.

Early Promise of Talent Frequently Not Followed by Great Achievements.

The idea that genius reveals itself early in life does not at once recommend itself to common sense. Observation of nature as a whole suggests, first of all, perhaps that her choicer and more costly gifts are the result of a long process of preparation. And, however this may be, there is certainly more moral suggestiveness in the thought that intellectual distinction is the reward of strenuous adolescence and manhood than in the supposition that it can be reached by the stripling at a bound through sheer force of native talent. And it may not improbably have been a lively perception of this ethical significance which fostered in the classic mind so widespread a disbelief in early promises of great intellectual power. We find a typical expression of this sentiment in the saying of Quintilian: "Illud ingeniorum velut præcox genus non temere umquam pervenit ad frugem" That is to say, the early promise of talent is rarely followed by the fruit of great achievement. It is evident that this saying embodies something like a general theory of the relation between rank of talent and rate of development. When superior intellectual ability shows itself at an early date it is of the sort that reaches its full stature early, and so never attains to the greatest height. On the other hand, genius of the finer order declares itself more slowly. In order to estimate the soundness of this view, two lines of inquiry would be necessary. We should need to ask, first of all, what proportion of those who had shown marked precocity have afterward redeemed the promise of their youth; secondly, what number of those who have unquestionably obtained a place among the great were previously distinguished by precocity? These two lines of investigation are, however, in a measure distinct. It may turn out that a large proportion of clever children never attain to any thing but to mediocrity in later life, and yet that the majority of great men have been remarkable as children.—*Popular Science Monthly.*

—One of the pastimes among the convicts that affords amusements to the "trusties" is for one of them to take a three or four-mile run early in the morning to keep the bloodhounds in training. The trusty is always perfectly willing to make the race, and is paid for his trouble by the bosses.—*Lumpkin (Ga.) Independent.*

—The following curious verdict was rendered recently by a New York jury: "We Juory, Have come to an agreement that it was an accident, but if the said deceased is under 14 years of age we blame the firm, but if the deceased is above age we blame both parties."